

# The Clearing House

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## THE CLEARING HOUSE

*A journal for modern junior and senior high schools*

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# SOCIAL CHANGE:

High schools must prepare pupils for accelerating trends—Committee of schoolmen studies 19 phases

By

WARREN W. COXE

MOST OF US tend to resent change. It outmodes some of our habits, it robs us of valued acquisitions, and it destroys our sense of security. Change, however, is inescapable. This has always been so, but it is only in recent years that changes in both material and social life have been so rapid as to be almost breath-taking. Previous generations, although resentful of changes, have had more time to adjust to them satisfactorily.

In our time changes occur so rapidly that we have scarcely adjusted ourselves to one



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Social changes have been taking place in recent years at such an accelerating speed that present generations barely catch the caboose as the train shoots by—if they aren't left at the station. What can the high schools do to develop graduates who are not too conservative for their day, not too resentful of inevitable, fast-moving trends? A year ago the author organized a committee of the New York State Association of Secondary School Principals to study social and economic trends and their implications for education. In this article he discusses the problem, and lists nineteen phases for consideration. Dr. Coxe is director of the division of research of the New York State Education Department.*

mode of life when that becomes outmoded. Because of this situation the question to which an answer should be sought is: How can we learn the meaning of these changes so that we may make appropriate individual adjustments to them and so that we may control them in the interests of society generally?

It will do us no good to strive for "the good old times"; history, in a very real sense, does not repeat itself. While availing ourselves of the valuable lessons to be drawn from history, we must recognize the impossibility of returning to the old way of life. Our look must be forward, not backward. We must learn how to discern what lies ahead.

If we have learned how to live with the present we have accomplished a great deal, but more is demanded. Our services at the task we have prepared ourselves to perform may no longer be needed; the organizations in which we thought ourselves valued members may so change their activities that we find ourselves strangers.

Many people today have mastered techniques which permitted adjustment to particular situations but have not mastered the techniques which make possible an adjustment to new situations thrust upon them. When change was less rapid, techniques which helped us to adjust to particular situ-

ations were relatively adequate but the same techniques are inadequate today. New ones are needed.

One of the newer techniques, which will assist at least in understanding the nature of change, is the analysis of social and economic trends. If taken over a long enough period such trends will usually show a consistent pattern, sometimes interrupted by contradictory short-time trends. The short-time trends must be treated as such; the long-time trends may well influence social and personal planning.

President Hoover's Committee on Recent Social Trends performed a very significant service which has undoubtedly been influential in stimulating subsequent similar studies by governmental and private agencies. This Committee, in its review of the findings, made some pertinent observations.

It noted particularly the great disparity in trends. In some respects our country has made very great advance while in others there is an equally great lag. Individuals and groups have gone their own way without realizing the need for coordinated action. This has led to a disorganization which is especially serious in a country like ours, where life is so complicated. These unequal rates of growth in our social life have produced "points of tension" and have led to distortions in the lives of individuals.

The Committee considers our outstanding problem to be "that of bringing about a realization of the interdependence of the factors in our complicated social structure, and of interrelating the advancing sections of our forward movement." This is the "next phase of national growth."

These considerations have an especial significance for education. Education must seek to answer the question: What kind of preparation is needed by youth who are growing up in a rapidly changing world?

It is not enough to know, even if it were possible, in what kind of world the youth will be living when he becomes an adult, but because that world will be changing,

he will need to know how to adapt himself to a changing world instead of to a relatively static one. An essential element must be an appreciation of the interrelationship of trends, (1) as a means for understanding the complicated culture in which he must make his way, and (2) as an aid in producing a world more suitable for human living.

If education is to meet this challenge it must abandon the idea that traditional subject matter should be retained inviolate and that progress is limited to improved methods of school organization or to better methods of teaching. Progress of this type might be called intensive, or improvement in technique. It looks to the solution of immediate problems; it assumes that education is a self-contained field which must maintain an aloofness from other fields. There is danger, however, that in developing its own field education will "let the world pass by". This danger is one of the problems pointed out by the Committee on Recent Social Trends.

On the other hand, education has always been influenced by "outside" interests—just now we are conscious of pressures to reduce costs, to control the content of textbooks, to control the qualifications and selection of teachers, and to prepare for defense. Too rarely have we attempted to coordinate educational trends with social and economic trends in a systematic fashion. In view of the rapid changes now taking place such coordination cannot be left to chance.

We need studies which are extensive, as well as intensive; studies which will give us outlook and perspective as well as improved techniques. If the relationship of education to other fields were better understood and if, by a study of probable trends in these fields, education could get a vision of the task ahead, then sound progress would become more certain.

In view of the need for such a study, the author suggested to Lyndon H. Strough, Principal of the Niagara Falls High School



and chairman of the Planning and Implementation Committee of the New York State Association of Secondary School Principals, that he appoint a Committee on Social and Economic Trends and Their Implications for Education. The members of the committee are:

John K. Archer, Principal, Junior-Senior High School, Malverne; Frederick H. Bair, Superintendent of Schools, Bronxville; Warren W. Coxe, Director of Research, State Education Department, Albany; Samuel I. Hicks, Supervising Principal, Pearl River; Kenneth R. MacCalman, Superintendent of Schools, Nyack; Martin M. Mansperger, Principal, Junior-Senior High School, Freeport; Lloyd N. Morrisett, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Yonkers; Frank H. Nye, Principal, High School, White Plains; Hoyt D. Smith, Principal, Junior High School, Mamaronck; Alva T. Stanforth, Principal, Sewanhaka High School, Floral Park; J. Leroy Thompson, Superintendent of Schools, Tarrytown; Willis Thomson, Principal, Isaac E. Young Junior High School, New Rochelle.

The progress made by the committee this year has been due largely to the valuable assistance rendered by Dr. Ruth Wood Gavian, temporary Research Assistant in the Division of Research, New York State Education Department.

At its first meeting the committee decided upon a plan of procedure which made possible unusual progress. A meeting was held each month. At each meeting Dr. Gavian presented a digest of trends and conditions in some area and the committee addressed itself to the question: What changes in the educational program are suggested by these facts? Notes were made of the discussion and organized in two columns, the first describing shortages in the educational program and the second suggesting ways of overcoming the shortages.

The areas in which it was proposed to study trends and conditions were the following:

1. Health trends and conditions in New York State.
2. Suicide, mental disease, and mental health.

3. Consumer incomes, expenditures, borrowings, and savings.

4. Marriage and the family, including differential fertility rates.

5. Crime and delinquency.

6. Changes in the recreational pattern.

7. Changes in industry and labor.

- A. Changes in the occupational pattern.

- B. Changes in earnings, hours of labor, occupational hazards, and other working conditions.

8. The cooperative movement.

9. Government control and ownership.

10. Changes in the character of private enterprise—control, survival rate, earnings, prospects for the small businessman.

11. Distribution and its relation to the consumer.

12. Housing trends and conditions in New York State. Kinds and conditions of housing in New York State. Rentals and other evidences of the housing shortage. Accomplishments of government housing agencies.

13. Medical care—costs, distribution of medical services among income groups and in geographic areas, medical indemnity and hospital insurance, cooperative health services.

14. Dependency and social security in New York State. The types of relief; numbers receiving each type of relief; respective functions of private and governmental agencies in furnishing relief; the operation of social security legislation.

15. Taxation. The expanding functions of government. The distribution of the total tax load. The incidence of various taxes.

16. The national and state income. Its sources. Possibilities for increasing.

17. Changes in land use and agricultural production in New York State.

18. Educational trends—duration, variety, cost, and distribution of education.

19. The population of New York State and how it is changing (age, nativity, race, interstate migration, etc.).

To date five of these areas have been studied. One area was considered at each meeting, discussion of which lasted half a day. An authority in the area being studied was invited to sit with the committee to guide in interpreting the data and to make suggestions for desirable changes in the educational program. It was the unanimous opinion of the committee that these meetings were instructive and stimulating.

A half day proved too short a time to develop the educational implications of each area, nor was there sufficient opportunity to integrate the findings of different areas. The committee plans, therefore, to change its procedure for the next few months in order to integrate the findings thus far collected and to prepare material for the use of groups throughout New York State.

An interesting suggestion has come as a by-product of the committee's work. In the course of interviewing members of various state departments of New York State a great amount of material was uncovered which seemed of great value to high-school pupils. In general the departments were willing and sometimes enthusiastic about making this material available.

Some of the possibilities would be information concerning industrial jobs (wage turnover, conditions of work, location of demand, etc.), concerning insurance (meaning of standard provisions, kinds, purposes, costs, etc.), and concerning civil service (kinds of workers in state and local government service, training and experience requirements, rates of pay, etc.).

How may the committee's material be

used? This procedure may be described as a process for making widely and quickly available the significant findings from the mass of current social and economic research, and for discovering the implications of these findings for education in a democracy.

Too often the discussion of educational problems and the formulation of educational policy have not taken into consideration recent facts or the effects of recent changes. Such material as the committee is preparing can be the basis for the democratic formulation of educational policy. It can be used (1) in joint discussions of administrators and teachers, (2) in joint discussions by teachers and parents, (3) in joint discussions by administrators and civic groups, and (4) in collaboration between educational organizations in areas of common interest.

It is particularly important that material of this kind be made available to teachers if they are to keep abreast of the rapid social changes that are taking place and are to make curriculums which prepare boys and girls for the society in which they will live.

It seems probable that the material will need to be prepared for two kinds of groups: (1) For administrators and teachers a summary and interpretation of trends and conditions is needed, with suggestions as to implications for education; (2) for the high-school pupil and the general public a more popular presentation is needed. It should give the facts and their interpretation and include suggestions as to implications for our democracy.



### *Grammar on the Spot*

The relative effect upon English usage of the teaching of formal grammar in schools should be examined. Recent studies, most notably O'Rourke's, have indicated that there is far from complete mastery of even the essentials of English usage by students undergoing formal training in grammar. O'Rourke found only 34.7% mastery of essentials

by seventh-grade students, and only 85% by thirteenth-grade students. The use of the word "mastery" might also be questioned. What teacher has not observed the child say, in the classroom, "I haven't any", and a few hours later on the playground, "I ain't got none"?—LELAND P. BRADFORD in *Journal of Educational Research*.

# We Utilize the Educational Values of

## *The student-aid program of the Allentown Senior High School* THE N.Y.A.

By JAMES W. RICHARDSON

**A**FTER FIVE YEARS of operation, the federal student-aid program in high schools under the National Youth Administration still elicits scant enthusiasm in many quarters.

Some administrators passively accept it as a chore wished upon them by "the bureaucrats at Washington". Others consider it one of the alphabetical relief agencies of the federal government to be grafted onto the already crowded program of the secondary schools. In some cases the program has been reluctantly accepted after it has been insistently urged by local relief agencies. In other cases the program has been adopted because the money is available: "If we don't spend it, some one else will."

*Difficulties encountered in administering the NYA program.* Unquestionably, the administration of the NYA program in the high schools does present difficulties. In the first place, the selection of employe pupils, who can qualify on basis of need, is a task of much difficulty in the larger schools whose pupils come from a wide area. Some form of social-service case study is necessary in order to avoid including the

undeserving, because the economic status of pupils who apply is not well enough known.

Very few schools are equipped for such work, and when they are, such social-service workers are overburdened. Even under the best conditions of selection, the administrators of participating schools receive complaints about favoritism shown or carelessness practiced in the selection of workers.

In the second place, the administration of the NYA, like that of other activities of the federal government, is accompanied by much paper-report, red-tape work. The task entailed, necessary as it may be to the central administration of such a far-flung program, is one more burden to be placed upon the already overworked and inadequate clerical force of the average high school.

Furthermore, the placement of pupil workers and the supervision of their employment present difficulties. Real jobs should be available for NYA workers, and real jobs are scarce in the average high-school situation. Thus the ingenuity of supervisors has sometimes led to made-work which is not only ridiculous but harmful to the school as a whole. Wherever made-work is dishonest work, children are taught to expect rewards they do not earn. Any principal or teacher who becomes a party to the distribution of largess in the guise of wages for work of no social significance or of no meaning at all, is not only destroying the values of a fertile educational opportunity but also is contributing to the economic delinquency of youth.

Administrators may assign pupils to teachers who in turn are expected to find meaningful tasks for the pupils to do. But teachers complain that they have no valid use for the services of pupils assigned to

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *For the past five years the author has administered the NYA student-aid program in a large high school. He admits frankly that when he took over he believed, as did many other high-school people, that the NYA was a rather poor idea, and "something of an imposition". But after one year he changed his mind. In this article he explains the effective program which has been developed in his school. Dr. Richardson is vice-principal of Allentown, Pa., High School.*

them, that they must consume valuable time in making work for them to do, or that pupils assigned to them are indolent, inefficient, irresponsible and lazy. Under such conditions, pupils also complain about the treatment they receive at the hands of such employer teachers.

*A fruitful educational opportunity.* Notwithstanding the foregoing objections and others that probably have been made, the NYA program presents a fruitful opportunity for training high-school boys and girls in vocational and civic efficiency, and is worth all the trouble entailed in its careful administration. On the other hand, if the program is administered in a perfunctory or lackadaisical manner, boys and girls are harmed and the school would be better off without it.

The writer's acquaintance with the NYA student-aid program began in 1935 when he was called upon to administer it in a comprehensive urban senior high school, which today has an enrolment of approximately thirty-six hundred. At that time he considered the program something of an imposition upon the high school. He must confess that he was then in sympathy with many of the criticisms of the program which are current today. He is not so sympathetic with those criticisms now. One year of experience revealed, in addition to the numerous difficulties in the administration of the program, certain educational values in it which transcend mere relief to needy pupils.

Chief among the values are those inherent in the employer-employee relationship and the work-wage situation created by the program in the school. For the past four years the program has been administered with the generous cooperation of the faculty and the non-professional employes of the high school, to the end that its educational values be used for the benefit of the boys and girls who also need material assistance in school. Gradually the difficulties encountered at first in the operation of the program have been disappearing.

Today the NYA has been accepted as an integral part of the educational program of the school. Its introduction at the beginning of the school term is so eagerly anticipated by pupils and teachers alike that the administration of the program is a pleasure. No difficulty is encountered in enlisting the support and cooperation of teachers as supervisors of pupil workers. Complaints about the selection of pupils to participate in the program, about the usefulness of the work given them to do, about the treatment of pupil workers by their supervisors, or about stigma being attached to participation in the program have been so infrequent as to be negligible.

The scholarship of pupil workers has been above the average of the student body. Although standards of scholarship and school citizenship are strictly enforced, the discharge of pupil workers is infrequent. Comparatively few NYA workers leave school before graduation.

In addition to its practical usefulness to the administration of the school and to the teachers whose load is over-heavy, the NYA program makes available certain values to the participating pupils, which the school program could not otherwise provide. They are:

1. While seeking employment, the pupils learn how to sell their services to prospective employers.
2. While in quest of work or while on the job, they learn how to evaluate themselves as employes.
3. In a practical work-wage situation, they learn much about their rights and responsibilities in the employee-employer relationship.

*The selection and placement of pupil workers.* The values derived from the work-aid program, along with the smoothness of its operation, are largely the result of one phase of the administration of the program: the selection and placement of pupil workers.

After the quota for the school has been



determined a call is issued for a meeting of all pupils interested in participating in the NYA program for the year, who believe they can qualify with respect to age, citizenship and need. During the meeting, the administrator of the program emphasizes the following:

(1) The qualifications of pupil workers as set forth by the NYA, (2) the responsibility of workers to maintain a satisfactory level of scholarship, school citizenship, and workmanship for their continuance in employment, (3) the responsibility of pupils who are selected to find their own placement as workers.

This first meeting is also the occasion for explaining to the pupils the factors involved in getting a job: the value of a good record as a student and as a school citizen; the importance of favorable contacts previously made with teachers, now prospective employers; the availability of reliable information about jobs to be had; the factors to be considered in the evaluation of one's own qualifications for the jobs available; and how to prepare for an employment interview and how to take part in one. They are told that the administrator and others stand ready to give assistance to individual pupils who have difficulty in finding employment, but that the employment of each pupil is his own responsibility.

The purpose of the initial meeting with the pupils is not only to inform but also to select. Invariably more pupils attend this meeting than can be accommodated in the quota, which numbers sixty-three pupils in 1940-41. In general, the explanation of the program encourages only the qualified, the deserving, and the favorable "school risks". At the close of the meeting the pupils are instructed to report to the administrator or to the girls' counselor on their own time and fill in a preliminary application blank, which furnishes the basis for interviews with individual pupils.

Each pupil's case is checked against his school record and the records of the Social

Service Exchange, an office established locally as a clearing house for all relief and social-service case records. Occasionally, additional information about doubtful cases is sought elsewhere.

Need is the most heavily weighted qualification considered in the selection of pupils to fill the quota. Those pupils selected are required to fill in Form 303 of the NYA. After the completed form is checked for errors and omissions, and the declaration of citizenship and oath of allegiance have been executed, the pupil is issued a certificate which authorizes him to seek employment.

#### NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION

Date .....

This certifies that ..... has been approved to seek employment among the teachers of the Allentown high school faculty. He has pledged himself to do faithful work to the average of one hour a day per week; to do satisfactory school work in all his studies; and to be a good school citizen.

Respectfully,

James W. Richardson

.....

Supervisor

Simultaneously with the issuance of the call for the first meeting of pupils, faculty members and other employees of the school district in the high school are invited to submit to the administrator their requisitions for pupil workers. The requisition includes the name of the teacher, his room number, the description of the work to be done, the time of day or the school period when the pupil's services are required, and the qualifications required of the worker. The number of such requisitions in 1940 was seventy-five. The information from all the requisitions is summarized on one large sheet of paper, called the "Help-Wanted" sheet. In an accompanying box the headings of the sheet and two typical entries are shown.

The "Help-Wanted" sheet is displayed on a bulletin board so that pupils seeking jobs can refer to it easily. As positions are filled they are stricken from the list.

Teachers and others who are "in the

market" for workers receive the following instructions:

**DIRECTIONS FOR EMPLOYERS OF  
NYA PUPIL WORKERS**

*General*

Our purpose is to realize as much educational value as possible for the pupils who will participate in the NYA program. It is desirable to duplicate as faithfully as possible the employer-employee situation. In no instance will pupils be assigned arbitrarily as workers to teachers; the pupils themselves will be required to find their own jobs. In this way we will help them obtain some first-hand experience in job-hunting. If a pupil has already demonstrated to his teachers that he is a dependable, industrious and responsible person, he will have no difficulty in placing himself.

*The Plan*

1. Beginning today, each pupil approved for NYA employment will carry a form certifying to that effect. During the next few days, teachers should be prepared to receive applications from pupils for employment. The teacher should feel free to interrogate the pupil closely concerning his qualifications, and if the teacher believes he would not find the pupil a satisfactory employe, he should feel free to refuse the application. Naturally, pupils will seek employment with teachers whose classes they attend this year. This is a desirable practice. Teachers may entertain the applications of pupils they have had previously. If and when the teacher has selected a pupil, he should sign his name above the word "Supervisor" on the form the pupil carries.

2. Teachers may become supervisors of not more than two pupil employes. If a teacher needs more than two, he should consult with the administrator.

3. When a pupil's certificate is signed by the teacher, the pupil is employed and his pay begins. It is understood that no pupil's services may be required for more than an average of one hour a day per week.

4. Employe pupils who have study periods may be transferred to the classrooms of their supervisors for these pupils' vacant periods. This practice should reduce the number of cases of NYA employment interfering with the pupils' classwork. Insofar as possible, employment should be arranged so that its interference with classwork will be reduced to a minimum. The teacher is privileged to arrange for pupils to work after school for not more than one hour a day so long as the work is done under the personal supervision of the teacher.

5. Pupils absent from school may make up their NYA time by working extra during the week in question. In no case may time be made up after the close of the week in which the absence occurred.

6. Teachers are privileged to call upon their employe pupils to perform tasks they feel they can safely delegate to them. Some such tasks are: distribution of supplies, doing errands, cleaning blackboards, cleaning up after laboratory and shop periods, doing clerical jobs, checking attendance, scoring papers, etc.

7. The administration requires that participating pupils maintain a satisfactory level of school accomplishment. Any pupil whose marks are below passing in any subject, or whose conduct is called to question, is in danger of losing his job. A pupil who fails to pass in less than three-fourths of his work at any rating date will be discharged.

8. Teacher employers who find the services of pupils unsatisfactory should bring such cases to the attention of the administrator. Pupils whose services are consistently unsatisfactory will be discharged.

9. A teacher who no longer has any valid need for the services of a pupil should consult with the administrator about the transfer of the pupil to some one who does need such services. To continue the employment of a pupil under such conditions subverts the worthy purposes of the program.

When the pupil is given the certificate authorizing him to seek work, his attention is called to the Help-Wanted poster. If his

**HELP WANTED**

<i>Room</i>	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Description of the job</i>	<i>When pupil's services are required</i>	<i>Qualifications required</i>
201	Mrs. Johnson	Checking tests, recording marks, writing lists, etc.	Any period	Preferably a commercial senior
2	Mr. Smythe	Cleaning and keeping tools in order in the auto shop	7:30-8:00 and 2:30-3:00	A boy who has some shop training

qualifications are such that he can fill a position to his liking, if his reputation in school recommends him, and he knows how to sell his services, he usually has no difficulty in finding a job. Oftentimes the services of certain pupils have been engaged tentatively by teachers even before the certificate has been issued.

After the pupil has returned his certificate signed by his employer, a record sheet is filed for him in a loose-leaf ledger. This record is kept up to date and becomes his history as an NYA employe.

As can be expected, some pupils have difficulty in finding jobs. If they do not voluntarily bring their difficulties to the attention of the administrator or the counselor of girls, they are called in and interviewed. Difficulties are analyzed and suggestions are made to assist the pupils in obtaining employment. In no instance is any pupil assigned to an employer. In every instance, the employment relationship is entered voluntarily by both pupil and teacher. Whenever a pupil is unable to obtain employment to his liking, he must of course accept that which is less desirable or remain unemployed. In such cases the pupils cannot avoid comparing themselves with others who have been more successful; nor can they avoid evaluating themselves to bring out their deficiencies. Only in very few cases do pupils completely fail in finding jobs.

*Conclusions.* The method of selection and placement of pupil workers seems to have been largely responsible for the general satisfaction which has accompanied the local operation of the NYA program. Some evidences supporting this statement follow:

1. The teacher employers give the program intelligent and wholehearted support,

which is probably due in great measure to the part they take in the selection of their workers. The teacher has the privilege of untrammelled choice. He is not required to retain an employe for whose services he has no use. He may discharge an employe for cause after consulting with the administrator, but cases of discharge are infrequent.

2. In general, the faithfulness and industry of the pupils as employes, and their scholarship, attendance, school persistence and morale in comparison with the student body as a whole are quite satisfactory. No stigma of indigency, visible or subtle, has been attached to participation in the program. The fact that every pupil must maintain a satisfactory level of scholarship, school citizenship and workmanship; and must obtain his own employment and continue in it successfully has undoubtedly helped to dissociate indigency from participation in the program.

Moreover, the administration avoids using the NYA as a "reformatory", notwithstanding a strong impulse to give employment to certain pupils in the hope of solving their behavior problems. Perhaps too frequently we well-intentioned schoolmasters reward the law-breaker in school because his offenses make him conspicuous, while we give scant consideration to the up-right school citizen.

3. The normality of the employer-employe relationship, which is established, continued and ended as it usually is in the work-a-day world, appears to be a source of satisfaction to the pupil workers. They, too, have the privilege of choosing their employers; and when they encounter serious difficulty in their quest they are given the assistance on their individual problems.



### *Fine Buildings, No Supplies*

We are so busy building big, fine, too-expensive buildings there is no money for equipment. We teachers scratch and scrape and use our own money to buy necessary small articles or do without them.

Superiors and the public give us a schoolroom and forty-five pupils and then expect something out of the ordinary in results.—ADA BOYER in *School and Community*.

# FRAMINGHAM FACTS:

Our pupils investigate local standards of living

By  
MILDRED P. ELLIS

**D**URING THIS PERIOD of intensive national preparation and adjustment, the attitudes and interests of the citizens have turned toward the problem of maintaining the "American way of life". As in the case of the phrase "American standard of living", a vague halo surrounds the actualities which few people have really studied.

Both phrases indicate the recognition of a subtle difference between the American scheme of living and that of some other areas. A clear appreciation of these differences should lead to a finer faith and a deeper loyalty for the United States. If this one result can be obtained by the method here described the attempt is well worth the effort.

It was with a real desire to observe and weigh the so-called American standard of living that a group of senior-high-school pupils in Framingham, Mass., began the work in their sociology course which de-

veloped into an extended survey of the living conditions of the town.

Finding no adequate definition of the American standard of living available, and realizing that great variance existed among the different areas of the United States, the pupils decided to find out the level of living for their own town and compare that standard to the levels in other places. Although the class haunted the libraries and town offices, they found little organized material upon which they could depend. They soon concluded that this was a field in which original endeavor might find a place.

The group realized the impossibility of working toward any valid conclusions without adequate information. They accordingly decided to see what information a questionnaire might bring forth, and a group of pioneers volunteered to compile a set of questions which would obtain some of the important facts.

By a series of heated class discussions a majority agreement was finally reached that the questionnaire should get information upon six major topics, namely: housing conditions, including sanitation and congestion; the status of home ownership, together with property value ranges; the employment and wage conditions of the workers of the family; the home equipment, including electric lights and appliances to make living easier; the approximate use of income; and last, the provision for recreational and educational advantages.

A set of questions covering these major topics was developed and submitted to the

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Future citizens of a democracy should be very much concerned about standards of living. And not in the abstract, either. There are plenty of standards of living right in the local community that pupils can investigate in person. And they can get figures from other communities for comparison. In this article Miss Ellis reports on the annual survey of living conditions in Framingham made by pupils in her sociology class. The author teaches social studies in Framingham, Mass., High School.*



class. Discussion and revision followed until the group accepted a tentative form for the experiment. The questions were then mimeographed and given to approximately 260 pupils, whose answers were representative of nearly 1200 people. All the questionnaires were anonymous, and the committee were insistent that the papers bear no distinguishing marks of any type, since they were interested only in sociological data on a broad rather than an individual basis.

Under housing information, the degree of congestion was easily determined by finding the number of persons in each home as well as the number of rooms in each house. Research work carried on by members of the class in connection with the survey brought out the fact that the Federal housing authorities considered one room per person the minimum standard for healthful living. Simple arithmetic gave the town of Framingham a slightly better score in the survey for each year, since the room allotment per person varied between 1.5 and 1.2 throughout the period of study. A further congestion check showed that between eight and nine per cent of the homes were substandard each year—a relatively low figure.

The young social analysts were quick to point out, however, that the survey was far from perfect, since members of the lowest income levels frequently left school before they reached the twelfth grade, and further, that the sample of 260 families was too small to give really valid results.

On the topic of home status the questionnaire seemed relatively successful. The majority of families reporting rented their homes, at rentals averaging \$30 per month. Tenants were responsible for heat, light, and fuel, but water supply was the landlord's problem. Mortgages were fairly numerous but not large while the values of the homes showed a wide range—between \$1500 and \$15,000. Over the three-year survey period the answers on the questionnaires indicated both stability in condition and a reasonable degree of accuracy, since

no glaring discrepancies were noted.

By the time the facts began to clarify the issue, heightened interest of the class pushed the work ahead. Teams of pupils recorded the data available, studied them, compared them with other areas in which they had gained information, and finally reduced a mass of statistics to a set of extremely useful ideas, all bearing specifically on the main problem. "Blind rooms" (without outside windows) were noted; homes without proper sanitation were discovered; inadequate heating systems were in evidence—all of this disturbed Young America no small amount, for these things were here, right in their own town, even in the homes of their classmates!

Gradually the composite picture began to appear. The families were hard-working, thrifty, independent middle-class folk. Nearly all did their own laundry and housework, few had a maid or even temporary "help". Bank accounts were common enough but of small size. Radios were plentiful but telephones came and went with the times, while the family car served many a purpose for many a year.

Recreation was often provided but was inexpensive in type; education beyond high school was within the reach of ambitious sons and daughters who were willing to work for it and pay their way with a blessing—but small monetary aid—from their families.

Some sections of the survey were consistently unsatisfactory. Among these was the section on use of income. Two points seemed evident in this part of the questionnaire: first, young people have little actual knowledge of the income of the family; second, many families seem to keep no systematic record of their expenditures. Many parents would have been surprised to listen in on the discussions which gave good proof that young people resent being deceived about the actual family income and are more than willing to bear their share of responsibility for its intelligent use.

The amounts spent for food and clothing were seldom given with any degree of certainty, and the miscellaneous items of expense, such as money for magazines, gifts, or entertainment, were frequently unknown. Even these sections were of value, since they pointed to areas where waste might be occurring in the budget. On the whole the questionnaire gave a composite picture of the general level of living for the pupils and their families.

As the sections were completed a group of graphing experts went to work, and at the end of the survey the walls were covered with graphs based primarily upon the work of the first year. The records of ensuing years were added as the work progressed. In the meantime typists were duplicating each report, so that two copies of the survey were made available for class use each year. Camera enthusiasts illustrated the work and original sketches added to the interest.

The talents of many of the pupils were put to work as they attempted to solve a problem which was interesting and real. Not only did these young people gain knowledge of their own town; they gained in their ability to compare conditions and seek solu-

tions to problems which they themselves recognized. The value of whatever technique they gained was far outweighed by the appreciation of what living was really like in this corner of the United States.

These pupils saw the "blind rooms" and hated their darkness; yet to balance this fact they realized the simple comfort that America held out to those citizens who worked for it. They recognized the tragedy of unemployment and debt, but they valued the thrift and the struggle for financial security. This was their town, these were their people.

Only through such frank observation and realization of the truth can the United States hold to the fine things in its way of life and eliminate the ugly, degenerating tendencies. The young people of America are ready to build an even greater civilization, but they must have knowledge and training before they can work intelligently upon their task. Studies such as this one may help to indicate the trends, the points of stress and weakness, and the stable foundations in every community upon which we can build a greater democracy and a finer way of life.



### *The Mathematics of War*

By their very nature wars are mathematical. . . . The strategy of war is a form of applied mathematics. . . . Should a teacher use the mathematics of warfare as a life-situation? If there were a reasonable assurance that wars could be permanently abolished, he certainly should not. But it is most unlikely, especially after the blatant failure of the League of Nations, that such an assurance will be forthcoming within the life-time of this generation. The conclusion appears, therefore, inescapable that a widely diffused understanding of the rudiments of war strategy ought to be an integral part in the defense of American democracy, and the extent to which such rudiments can and should be imparted in the public schools ought to be a subject for professional deliberation at this very moment.—PAUL R. NEUREITER in *School Science and Mathematics*.

### *Community Music Plan*

*Music Teachers:* Consider the taxpayer—and parent. The man who pays your salary wants to see some results for his money. So give him results. He may be surprised! Don't consider your school department a community entertainment bureau, but give your boys and girls every opportunity for performance that comes their way. Make every public appearance contribute to their music education. Also, you will probably discover that your public could stand further education in consideration. A dinner club, which always pays its speaker and expects a boys' quartet to entertain them and go without their dinner to do so, needs a few gentle hints on courtesy. Church groups, lodges, clubs of all kinds and the Chamber of Commerce will want your services. If they give you sufficient notice, be liberal with your assistance.—RUTH JENKIN in *Music Educators Journal*.

# ACADEMIC "0" HOUR:

Is it unfair and destructive to grade zero  
as a penalty for each unprepared lesson?

By JAIRUS J. DEISENROTH

WHILE ON THE CAMPUS of a neighboring university for a few hours recently, nothing held my attention more than the story which was told me by an old faculty friend, whose main job is that of supervising the student teachers in an outlying rural consolidated high school.

His problem at the moment, and later, was that of convincing one of the regular teachers that her philosophy needed some overhauling, particularly in a situation in which a student teacher by sheer instinct had revealed a startling defect in this teacher's method. Evidently the teacher had issued instructions to the young man to deal with pupils in her own preferred manner, which was, to say the least, raw and rigid in every detail.

A surprise visit by the faculty supervisor turned up the worst. This particular teacher's fault was that of setting definite and inflexible penalties for every pupil failure to perform stated assignments. Her specialty was the assignment of the value "zero" for each unprepared lesson. It made me think of the motion picture *Topaze*, in which one of the Barrymores appeared, and in which there was much evidence of this medieval "zero" technique.



EDITOR'S NOTE: *The author here denounces the big empty "0" which many teachers assign a pupil for a momentary lapse from academic grace. And he wants it known that names, places, and incidents are purely fictitious—but strictly typical. Mr. Deisenroth is principal of Bennett Junior High School, Piqua, Ohio.*

The professor and I agreed that there was something wrong with this teacher and with her method, but we did not have time to discuss the matter thoroughly, not to mention setting down a cure for the disease!

Standards are standards the world over, no doubt, and the requirements of schools out of the charmed "thirty" must be based largely upon the standards prescribed by the accrediting agencies. Even so, there must be some reason for a condition that has changed so little from the *Topaze* days of Bismarck to the Progressive Education days of F.D.R. It appears that many of our teachers still believe that stringent penalties are a necessity, and that the times for applying these penalties are entirely decided by the teacher, regardless of the conditions that surround each individual pupil from day to day.

I presume, too, that if the teacher did not put down a little number every time a pupil stood upon his feet the parents might be a little bewildered, if not disappointed. You and I have seen this happen a hundred times, without realizing, perhaps, the utter unfairness of it. We have seen a boy given a zero because, called upon for a recitation or the presentation of an assignment, he had failed to respond.

I can see the boy rising to his feet, admitting his lack of preparation, and then retiring quietly to his seat with the full knowledge that the remainder of that class hour will be so much wasted time for him. He realizes that nothing he can do will erase the damning effect of that zero.

At present I can see no clear way out of this tangle unless we, as teachers, are pre-

pared to apply the same standards to our own work and our own preparation.

Looking over the lady in case I can readily imagine her to resemble others I have heard about or have known personally. She probably had a good reason for providing daily doses of headaches to the boys and girls in her care.

Strictly social, she doubtless was given to late hours—a result of the engagements that are of such interest to schoolwomen who are ready to drop the academic robe and take on the bridal veil! No doubt this lady had many a day when her lesson planning was sketchy, to say the least, and often she would beg off teachers' meetings because of her splitting headaches.

Perhaps if we gave this teacher a zero for all her failures to perform as a regular human being should, she too would be held over for another year. However, the application of zero might be called discriminatory on our part.

Then we must not forget the gentleman at the other end of the corridor, who could use a few zeros for his manifest failures. He is the one, you know, who assigns "study" work so he may get out the basketball schedule which should have been ready last week. He just might be that fellow who feels that a dramatic recital of his family woes and joys would be elevating and instructive to youth who are preparing for life, real life, as it were.

We must hand him a zero for his abandonment of a dull class in civics to listen to the pleading of the insurance man who just happened to come along at that time and "didn't want him to miss out on the new contract", and so forth.

Of course this treatment of the erring teacher does not allow for unusual conditions. If we "docked" teachers and principals and superintendents for their lapses as we "dock" boys and girls for theirs, there would be a quick howl from those concerned that we are not treating grown men

and women with the respect their personalities deserve.

Going back to the classroom situation, we may select the case of the entirely fictitious Johnny Green, a member of your class in American history. On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of this week he has brought in well prepared lessons, and has also taken part in the class discussion from time to time.

If Johnny Green moved from your city and you were asked for an estimate of his work for the four days he attended your class you might possibly give him a mark of 78 (Don't ask me how a history teacher arrives at such a mark). That mark would travel with Johnny to the next point in his journey through educationland.

If, however, Friday morning finds him in your class, and he does not hand in an assignment on the causes of the Mexican War, you have an opportunity of proving to him that when you assign a topic you mean that he should prepare it. You look at him sternly and in a sharp voice deliver the ultimatum—"zero". Well and good, you may say, he deserved it, and perhaps you are right. But only perhaps!

We take this mark for Johnny Green, the 78 earned on the first four days of the week, and add in the zero earned on Friday. This brings us an average for five days of just a little over 62, enough to fail him in your school, where the passing mark is 70.

Now we find that Johnny Green, a boy who until Thursday had received a passing 78, receives a failing 62, because his family waited until Saturday to move from town! No matter that his home was torn up in preparation for moving. Johnny had neglected his work and had failed to mention the reason. A teacher must give rewards and penalties without fear or favor.

You say this is an extreme case. It is far too frequent for my peace of mind now and in the future, when my own children may be put under teachers who hand out zeroes



instead of bouquets. Do we as teachers really feel that a boy who has been successful four days in a given week can become a complete failure for the week just because of one bad day?

In preparing this discussion I have made an effort to work out some mathematical trick whereby we could negate the effect of zero in evaluating the work of the pupil. Surely, I thought, there must be some other way to show a child the error of his ways. I have felt that Angelo Patri could not be entirely wrong when he said that "marks are given to encourage study, not to kill it". But far from becoming a strictly scientific article it has become philosophical in tone, and perhaps rightly so. The citing of the imaginary Johnny Green case might be much more valuable than the citing of full statistics.

We must discover, I now reason, the factors that influence the production of failing work, as well as the factors that turn an otherwise acceptable teacher into a cold and calculating computing machine. As supervisors of instruction and lovers of children we are bound to study these underlying conditions. If we fail to recognize the symptoms of this all too frequently seen condition, then we have missed the bus.

I do not wish to state categorically that a teacher should ignore conditions that may exist in his classroom, and which are producing classroom sit-down strikes. But I do feel that there is something of the vindictive in a spirit which piles penalty after penalty upon pupils who may need just a little more encouragement and some definitely practical help.

There are real reasons for the practice of the zero habit in grading pupils' work. Probably underlying the whole structure of this practice is the demand from the authorities that the teacher produce records

that tell the exact numerical standing of each pupil, as well as the super-demands from the colleges for exact statements about each and every applicant for admission.

Beyond these general underlying conditions are the personal factors that enter into the attitudes of both pupil and teacher. These factors supply tinder and spark for trouble both in and out of the school. Briefly, these are the factors that occur to me as needing both attention and in some cases radical correction:

#### *On the Part of the Pupil*

1. Pure "cussedness"
2. Laziness
3. Inability to grasp work
4. Chronic illness
5. Unusual physical condition
6. Unexpected developments at home
7. Accidental failure to prepare work
8. Dislike for the teacher
9. Dislike for subject
10. Realization that it is really not a life and death matter, after all

#### *On the Part of the Teacher*

1. Purity of academic traditions
2. Lack of interest in the child
3. Inability to teach
4. Chronic illness
5. Unusual physical condition
6. Unexpected personal situations
7. Desire for revenge
8. Desire to show authority
9. Fear of censure from superiors
10. Ignorance of the psychological values of success and failure

Does it matter when a child fails in the preparation of his work? Does it matter when a teacher fails to handle each child as an individual? Does it matter if a teacher, being more mature and more developed, does a destructive job in the classroom instead of a constructive job?

It does matter. And the assigning of zero will never cure the conditions that exist in every schoolroom in the entire nation.



NOTICE TO POETS: The editors of THE CLEARING HOUSE are always interested in receiving light verse on secondary-education subjects for consideration.

# GUIDANCE

*Faculty committee makes  
specific recommendations*

## *through* INSTRUCTION

By WILLIAM I. OLSEN

WHEN a faculty committee in the Los Gatos Union High School undertook a comprehensive study of the school's guidance services, it adopted as basic the concept that guidance is an inseparable part of the educational process. It felt that all instruction is guidance and that guidance is not something incidental to teaching.

The committee expressed this concept in three basic principles upon which, it felt, any guidance program for the school should be based. Those principles were:

1. That as much guidance as possible should be done through regular classroom teaching instead of being relegated to a homeroom or guidance period entirely.
2. That all teachers should be active participants in the guidance program, rather than a few specialists.
3. That the school's present curriculum should, as much as possible, be utilized for purposes of guidance.

It is the intention of this paper to pre-



EDITOR'S NOTE: "During the past year," writes the author, "I served as an active member of a faculty committee charged with making a detailed study of the Los Gatos, Cal., Union High School's guidance services and suggestions for its improvement. This article concerns our findings and recommendations, emphasizing the importance of greater utilization of classroom teaching and the curriculum in the guidance program. Because this article deals concretely and practically with a specific school situation, I believe that it will be of interest to administrators and high-school teachers outside our school."

sent suggestions as to how such a program could be carried out in a typical high school. The suggestions are one result of a detailed investigation of student needs, as revealed by questionnaires to pupils, alumni, parents and faculty. In general, it was found that these adolescent needs fell into two categories.

First, there were those problems pertaining to the adjustment the pupil must make to his high-school environment. He wants help on such questions as whether to plan to attend college; what are the customs, the rules and regulations of the school; how can the high school be of assistance in his vocational choice and preparation; and the like.

Second, the older high-school pupil wants aid in anticipating some of the adjustments he will have to make as an adult. He wants some knowledge that will prepare him for marriage and the responsibilities of a homemaker and a parent; he wants to know how to be an efficient consumer of goods and services and how to use his leisure time in a worthwhile and socially desirable manner; he wants some training in the social graces.

If the high school is to fulfill its functions, if it is to justify the millions of dollars spent annually in its support, it must meet these needs. How can that be done without making radical changes in a school's program or adding to its cost? Here are the suggestions of one group of teachers in answer to that question.

With a slight shift of emphasis every teacher can teach his particular specialty in terms of the needs of his pupils rather than as a prescribed content of subject matter to be mastered. A few illustrations will suffice.

Every instructor can stress the vocational implications of his subject, making it particularly meaningful to every pupil if the student's vocational interests and aptitudes, as revealed by his personal records, are kept in mind. Teachers of physiology, biology, physical education and psychology can have units built around problems of personal health with which the adolescent is immediately concerned; complexion, fatigue, posture, are examples. Every teacher can give attention to the technique of effective study habits and should devote part of each semester to the methods of studying his particular subject field.

Courses in art, music, literature, shop, and homemaking can be built around the avocational interests of those enrolled in such classes. Already today much of the instruction in the social studies is in terms of the pupil's participation in his immediate social environment as well as that of his future role as a dynamic citizen.

Many problems pertaining to the adjustment the pupil must make to his high-school environment can be met through the usual required course in Freshman English, rather than special courses in orientation to which there are often objections. There is no content to English. It is a tool subject, and lessons in reading, grammar, composition, literature, and oral presentations would be far more meaningful to the pupils and the skills could be taught in a more functional manner if the problems confronting the freshman student were the content of the course.

Typical topics to be considered thus would be the organization of the school, student government, courses of study, effective study habits including the use of the library, social relationships and elementary vocational guidance.

Such a program would be more effective if it were administratively possible to schedule all Freshman English classes for the same period. Such an arrangement would allow all freshmen to meet as one

group when occasion demanded, for example, to see motion pictures, to hear talks on vocational possibilities, to be addressed by student officers, to hold class meetings, to learn school songs and yells, to prepare an assembly program, perhaps even to get instruction in dancing and applied etiquette.

Too often in the past such activities were carried on in the traditional homeroom period, where the freshman found himself being "preached to", where the questions in which he had the greatest interest were treated as something incidental to his reading twenty pages of *Ivanhoe* for the day's English class.

There is a place for classes in needlecraft in the high-school program, or, at least, the inclusion of that art in a regular sewing class. The emphasis in such a class would be on sewing as a recreational activity. The survey carried on at Los Gatos showed that a large per cent of alumnæ women report needlecraft as an avocational interest. Knitting, embroidery, weaving, needlepoint and the like would be taught.

Today Los Gatos Union High School offers a course in leisure activities as a result of this suggestion. Not only is instruction given in needlecraft, if there is a call for it, but in any form of recreational activity in which students profess an interest, including contract bridge.

In some schools today social dancing is a part of the physical-education program. But the opportunity to teach the etiquette involved in this boy-girl relationship should not be overlooked. In fact, classes in English, social science, and natural science, to mention but a few, abound in opportunities to teach such relationships. Any teacher who accepts the philosophy that his primary purpose is to teach young people and not subject matter is well aware that there is a crying need for such instruction. Besides, with other social agencies playing a diminishing part in such instruction, the school must assume the role if it is to serve

society as well as serve the individual.

Perhaps the best way to aid the more mature high-school pupil anticipate reactions to problems he must face as an adult is through what is commonly called the Senior Problems course. Here, again, this need may be met by a shift of emphasis in the traditional senior social-studies classes, if it is not advisable to introduce a new course.

Topics suggested for such a course are consumer economics, problems of personality development, vocational and educational orientation, and family relationships. Even cooking for boys might be included as well as practical household mechanics.

To be most effective this course should be arranged so that pupils may elect those topics they wish to pursue. The boy planning to go on to college is going to face different problems of adjustment than the one going into the field of business or industry. In other words, pupils should be permitted to choose units which cover their needs and problems, and these units should

be taught by teachers best qualified to handle them regardless of departmental affiliation. Whether such a course should be made compulsory for all pupils is a question for each school to decide; both practices are followed today.

These suggestions are given as being merely illustrative of how much group guidance can be carried on through the regular instructional program, so that guidance activities do not appear to the pupil as something incidental to his program of studies. While every teacher realizes that there is always a place for individual counseling, he must not lose sight of the fact that there is little need for elaborate guidance set-ups or radical curriculum changes to make the school not only of more service to its pupils but a more vital social agency as well.

The change must come in the teacher's mind, in his point of view toward his pupils and his subject specialty. That—and not administrative machinery—is the greatest obstacle to overcome.



## The Draft Squeezes Job-Hunting Teachers

Many young men ready to go into teaching are not being hired because of the draft. . . . Administrators with whom I have talked during the past six months seem about equally divided on the issue of employing inexperienced men teachers. One group does not want young men who might have to leave in the middle of the year because turnover seems to decrease the quality of teaching in a department in a geometrical rather than an arithmetical progression. Taking the same side of the issue, another group fears that they may be caught in the middle of the year with no competent men and women teachers available. Thus they might be forced to rely on doubtful substitutes.

Some administrators avoided the issue for a long time by waiting to see whether we would get into the war before hiring their teachers this year. The results of taking this side of the issue, regardless of the reasons, have been unfortunate from several points of view.

Because of the delay this year in hiring teachers, the profession has lost to business at least ten to fifteen per cent of its most capable teachers. Business knows what competition for good men means. If the man has promise it does not stop to ask his draft number; it takes him and hopes to have him back at the expiration of his army term, a better man for the experience. If the teaching profession really wants strong men teachers, and I am sure it does, it should avoid delay. Last year, even March was too late, for some young men already were hired by industry.

But this is not the only result. Some of our best young men are made cynical by the first question administrators ask: "What is your draft number and probable classification?" They feel that they are being asked to sacrifice at least a year's time and that the administrators should be willing to make an equal sacrifice.—GEORGE E. SCHLESSER in *School and Society*.



# JERRY THE GIRAFFE:

A boy artist's idea starts 100 pupils in 4 departments on an adventure in correlation

By HERNDON SMITH

A paper towel, a baling wire—  
A young giraffe in gay attire.

THAT WAS THE WAY it began, this book called "The Adventures of Jerry", to which more than a hundred pupils of four departments of the Centralia High School contributed their part.

In second-year art, George made the animal figure described above. Its wire and paper toweling chassis was painted rather unrealistically. One might say it was a giraffe sports-model of the all-white-below-the-fenders type.

Dorothy, during her weekly "do what you please period" in free-hand drawing, chose to make a still-life in tempera of the little figure. Daisy-like flowers Dorothy placed on the black background, in what she calls a "mid-air pasture".

Miss Mayme Hollan, whose pupils do these delightful things, gave me Dorothy's picture in a black frame for Christmas. I felt I just must share it with the composition class of which Dorothy is also a member. My sophomores fell quite in love with



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Jerry the Giraffe* is a comical fellow created by an art pupil in Centralia, Wash., High School, where the author teaches English. Jerry had character, and he took Miss Smith's sophomores by storm. He became an excellent motivation for work in the English, art, typing, and shop departments. He had adventures. The adventures are now in a book written, illustrated, and "published" by the student body. We'd like to read that book—but unfortunately there is only one copy.

the innocently-mischievous expression of the little fellow. Don named him Jerry, the Giraffe; Celesta called him Jerome Giraffe, Junior. (They had studied alliteration in their literature.) Interest mounted to the point where Barbara suggested Jerry might be the type that would have adventures.

"Such adventures," volunteered Alberta, "as any little boy would have."

"Even like we had when we were children," offered Arthur, the smallest, whose eyes smiled at me from a point scarcely higher than the level of his desk.

And adventures Jerry did have! He skied on Mt. Giraffe. He was spattered with mud by his pal, Jumbo the elephant, so he'd no longer have a white vest and trousers (his mother's pride), but spotted ones like the other boys. He aided the "G" men; he had a girl friend. Each of his twenty-nine adventures was full of sympathetic understanding of the little fellow, who by this time was quite one of the class.

"Why couldn't Dorothy's class illustrate our stories?" So Miss Hollan read them to her free-hand art class. "Each picture should tell a story" would be their problem, they decided, and every pupil formed his own idea of Jerry's appearance and character traits.

Cecelia's definite brush strokes made the wayward skiis that entangled a bewildered Jerry while a lavender-hued Mt. Giraffe lifted its snows in the background. Soft blue-greens Jack contrasted with the yellow-greens of the jungle background surrounding the mud hole, where the little playmate elephant squirted spots over the white trousers and vest of the delighted

Jerry. And so on for thirty or more joyous illustrations of little giraffes! Each was mounted on dark-brown paper to form a contrast with the yellow-green story pages.

Verna headed a committee of the advanced typing class, who worked under Miss Grace Jackson in typing the pages of the book. Their problem was largely one of spacing and accuracy, for no erasures were possible on the tinted mat surface. The authors proofread their stories and offered suggestions and corrections to the typists.

The composition pupils also titled their stories. A limited space and a maximum of action were the requirements which brought forth captions such as "Jerry's Heart Beat Wilder", "The Muddy Water Just Flew", or "Each Leg Went in Opposite Directions".

Evelyn arranged the stories in order. Don offered to make up the list of illustrations and table of contents. Dorothy volunteered to write the introduction—a letter to the reader. Virginia and Elloise wrote the dedication. Jean and Mary planned the title page, with a small picture of Jerry in its center. Dorothy also wrote the foreword to

say that after all the "Adventures of Jerry" were but the musing of the cockatoo, who knows all the secrets of the jungle. To prove this she painted the little red and green bird with its head aslant, listening.

The authors decided the book should have covers of fir veneer. Rodney, who was taking shop from Mr. Dell Russell, offered to prepare and finish the cover. Dorothy, with the suggestions of the class, designed and submitted for their approval a full-length portrait of Jerry with his name in large letters at the top. Burned in dark brown, the cover further carried out the two-toned effect on the natural fir by having a long vertical hinge of brown leather. The vertical idea was Dorothy's—to conform to the long line of Jerry's neck, she explained. Rodney studded the hinge with antique gold nailheads.

"The Adventures of Jerry", with its statue and picture inspiration, was exhibited at the South West Washington Fair, a plea for further correlation when—

What we write, you will draw,  
She will type, and he will saw.



## Mill Town High School's Maternity Shelter

One afternoon, Superintendent L. P. Hollis was stopped on a Greenville, S.C., street by a wealthy merchant. "Pete," said the man, "what would you do with \$1,000?" The average superintendent might think at once of the leak in the roof or the need for a new furnace. Hollis mentally checked down his list of necessities and remembered the babies born on kitchen tables, the large number of mother and infant deaths due to ignorance and poverty, and replied, "I would do something for the women who are going to have babies."

The merchant turned Pete Hollis around and, using his back as a rest, wrote out a check for \$1,000. With the money, Pete Hollis took over a five-room frame dwelling adjoining the high school, put in beds, engaged nurses and started in a small way the now famous Maternity Shelter. Later, funds from Duke Foundation and American Woman's Hospital enabled him to expand the shelter's facilities.

In ten years, some 2,400 babies have been de-

livered in this school hospital. Foundlings and ailing infants born elsewhere have been taken care of, and several thousand women have come regularly to its clinics for pre-natal and post-partum attention and advice on birth control.

High-school girls in the senior class enter the shelter each morning, don rubber gloves and mask, bathe babies, make up formulas and help the mothers. If their parents consent, the girls may watch a delivery. They spend part of the morning in a small lecture room, learning nutrition and physiology. In this atmosphere, the facts of sex and reproduction seem natural and are received seriously. After the girls have put in 20 hours at the shelter, they earn coif and apron, becoming Health Couriers. Armed with a kit containing a mask and thermometer, they go from house to house, preaching the importance of proper screening and eating and reporting any cases of illness that need attention.—GEORGE KENT in *School and Society*.

# The Case of ROBERT KENNEDY

Pupil Case History No. 8:  
"He's absolutely hopeless"

By M. SANDFORD COOMBS

IT WAS during a homeroom period that my principal appeared in the doorway looking firm, very firm. Now she so seldom looks that way that I began "hastily to search my little soul", as Pycroft puts it. But she merely stood to one side, saying "Miss Coombs, here is a new boy we have decided to place in your room—Robert, Robert Kennedy. Robert, this is Miss Coombs. Remember, Robert, we hope you will enjoy being with us, and we all want to help you."

Whereupon she passed me two very meager report cards and turned away, leaving six feet of objectionableness in the doorway. He was thin, poorly dressed, the second worst case of acne I ever saw, shambling, greasy black hair stringing over his forehead, lips twitching, wrists protruding way beyond his cuffs, fingers pulling at each other, chin almost on his chest, eyes looking out like a benighted Skye terrier. There is no exaggeration in that picture.

As I told him where to sit and assigned



EDITOR'S NOTE: *The new pupil hadn't been in school three days before the teachers began to apply their direst adjectives to him: "awful", "filthiest", "rudest", and "hopeless". The author had to admit that the preliminary evidence supported the most hysterical descriptions of her "long loon"—but she became his partisan. She "felt from the first that there was something real under that awful exterior." This is the eighth article in THE CLEARING HOUSE Pupil Case History Series. Miss Coombs teaches in the Jamaica, N. Y., High School.*

one of the boys to introduce him to the other teachers and be generally responsible for his induction into our system, he stumbled over the feet of two children, slid into his seat on his spine, sprawled his legs out as far as they could go—which was two seats down—and favored me with a glance which said that he was there in body and that was all, and I could make what I wanted to out of it.

Noon time gave me a chance to look at his records: a parochial school; ranks averaging B in the lower grades, then sinking to a steady row of D's; no physical or mental history, of course; and a statement I have never seen before or since: "Removed because of trouble with the Sisters."

Our system requires a physical check by the nurse of each new entrant within one day of admission. The nurse and I worked together for ten years while I was Health Teaching Supervisor, so she has no inhibitions with me. Her official report ran as follows: E R 20/100, L 20/100; ears R 15, L 15; skin—very bad acne. It was enriched by a terse "the filthiest, rudest boy I ever saw. For Heaven's sake get busy before you send him down again."

On such meager information plus a statement from the office that his mother cried when she brought him in, I went to work.

Inside of three days I was getting the teachers' reactions—we have departmental work—with a vengeance. "What have they wished onto you this time, Coombs?" "That long loon of yours is the rudest thing I ever saw." "Robert's hopeless, absolutely hopeless."

Just why about that time I took up a

violent and militant backing of Robert I have never been able to explain satisfactorily to myself. It was distinctly something more than a conscientious effort to do my best by every pupil. But I felt from the first that there was something real under that awful exterior, and it *was* awful.

Perhaps the fact that I know from bitter experience how hard it is to be your full size when you are only fourteen may have had something to do with it. Maybe it was the pathetic contrast of that ill-clad figure to those around him. Perhaps it was the haunted look in his shifting—not shifty—eyes. But there is no use in denying that my partisanship found an uphill road with steep grades and no banked curves.

There was the matter of inspection, for example. The first day after Robert's arrival that inspection was due I explained to him before school our custom of removing shoes and stockings, unfastening collar, necktie and shirt, as well as showing finger nails, teeth and hair. Robert showed no resentment at the idea, and when I said "Shoes off", bent down to untie his.

As I moved toward Robert's row I saw the boys surging away from him with gestures of disgust, holding their noses, and one yelled out, "He stinks, Miss Coombs." After thirteen years of this sort of thing one is not usually much upset, but after I reached Robert's seat and leaned forward to look at him I had to turn and open a window *fast*.

The boys' verdict was conservative. Two huge flat feet with hammer toes, dirt literally caked on, were placed flatly on the floor, and Robert was hunched over regarding them apathetically, apparently undisturbed by the smell. Not feeling like coping with such a problem before all the rest of the class I asked him to put his socks on again quickly. I choked back a surging feeling in my stomach as he shifted his feet to and fro while he obediently proffered for inspection a set of yellowish snags, hands that might have come from a coal heaver's

home, and lank greasy hair. (No lice, it was the only thing he didn't have.)

That afternoon I had a little talk with him which ran about thus:

"Robert, you have running water at your house, don't you?"

"Yeah."

"And a nice bathroom, a tub, hot water?"

"Yeah."

"But I don't believe you took a bath this week?"

"Naw."

"Why, Robert? Your mother was willing wasn't she?"

"Yeah."

"Then why didn't you?"

"Dunno. Just didn't."

"Won't you please do it soon? We like our boys to look their best and you'll feel a lot better."

"Mebbe."

You will note that there was no "Miss Coombs" attached to his monosyllables, and all remarks came through straight lips held close together over his teeth, while his eyes glanced to and fro, never once meeting mine. He didn't take that bath either, as next week conclusively showed.

In about four weeks I made my first home call—ostensible reason, report card. His mother proved to be an Irish woman as wide as she was tall, with a flow of talk which reminded me of Niagara Falls. I gathered that Robert was the oldest, that a sister and a brother, fourth and third grades respectively, were "cute and sweet", and that Robert "just about broke her heart". The aforesaid brother and sister were hanging around, of course, to hear what they could hear, and I noticed that they were clean, well dressed, average in development.

A remark about the difficulties involved in keeping three children clean and well fed brought a hurried assertion that Robert liked to look "that way".

About that time (March) I began to demand loudly an intelligence test for my ugly duckling. At first the assumption of a



low I.Q. had seemed only too sure, but one day I saw a long snaky arm reach out and over the regular reference books in my library corner and abstract Jeans' *Stars and Atoms* deftly from my own personal books. After school Robert stopped at my desk. Balancing the book on two fingers, he made his longest remark to date:

"This's swell. Take it home?"

There was no guile in his face and his voice sounded sincere, so I said as briefly, "Sure."

A little later he returned it, wrapped in newspaper, but was quite deaf to hints of borrowing anything else. But somehow or other the more advanced reference books vanished for periods of about a week, always returning intact, and several times there were peculiar bulges under Robert's sweater at dismissal time.

Not till June did we get a Binet test, and to my delight Robert scored 113, while the Metropolitan Achievement placed him as an average 7.4, with literature on the 9 level, arithmetic on the 4.

By that time an opening wedge had been driven in Robert's reserve. One day in April the seventh-grade teachers and specials were having a sort of symposium on the outstanding difficult cases. Someone said, "Well, as far as Coombs' Robert goes, he's a total loss." "No," cried the art teacher, "Robert's good. He does fine work for me."

Naturally I said a few days later, "Robert, I heard something so nice about you from Mrs. D the other day. You're doing fine in art, she tells me."

Robert half looked at me and said "Yeah—yeah, I draw a lot—like to see some?"

I assured him I would, and there began a little ritual which continued at intervals—and still does. A piece of paper would appear on my desk, generally floating over my shoulder or directly over my nose as Robert passed by. Usually at the same time someone in the vicinity got kicked or tripped up or punched. A few hours later a voice would mumble "Like it, Miss Coombs?" (For with

the bestowing of gifts I acquired a name.)

As works of art Robert's pictures were merely average; as expressions of what meant beauty to him they were very revealing. Indian chiefs (in full regalia) and birds, conventionalized and in their natural habitat, were the chief topics. I kept every picture, and when Robert discovered that he would sometimes shamble up to my desk, pull open the drawer in which I kept them, and count them over carefully. Through it all I never lost an opportunity of telling him how proud I was of anything that could be remotely called a gain, as when he remembered to say "Excuse me", or picked up a pencil for someone else, or handed in half-way neat work. Do I need to say that these commendations were always made where the other fellows couldn't hear?

Except in art, however, my problem was getting straight U's, and in June he had to be told he was a repeater. Not feeling any too sure of his reaction, I broke the news, which was no news, to him and said, "I am giving you a choice, Robert. You know I have always wanted to help you all I could. When we divide up the repeaters I promise to get you with any teacher with whom you think you will be happy, or you can stay in this room."

Robert kicked the wall, bit his finger nails, and finally unburdened himself. "I'll stay here. You ain't so bad as some."

"Fine. Now, Robert, I need a very dependable helper next year. You heard all that fuss over the register? Somebody's got to help me check every week, and I want it to be you."

"I can't do no arithmetic."

"Never mind the arithmetic. You *can* add, and I want you for my official checker. A boy I can trust absolutely."

A piece of calcimine floated down to the floor after Robert's last vicious kick, as he gruffly said, "O.K. It's a date."

All this time I had not made a dent on the cleanliness problem. His feet were awful,

his nails a disgrace, his neck and wrists always showed high-water marks. Coombs' "Robert" was a joke in teachers' meeting, and I went to bat each time with the same vim that I used in assuring Robert on every occasion that I believed in his ability, his kindheartedness, and his courtesy.

The next year on the first inspection day a ringing call came from the back seat. "Hi, Miss Coombs, come and inspect me quick." There sat Robert swinging two huge feet in the air, and those feet were clean, as was his body and his nails, and, as far as possible, his teeth. What happened during the summer no one knows. The fact remains, he cleaned up and stayed clean—approximately.

The news of his I.Q. having been broadcast, the teachers expected more of him. His recitations were better, and he sometimes even volunteered information. In November he began to get secretive about having to "see a teacher". Overwhelmed by a very poor group, I didn't much bother with him. One day he volunteered, "I've a secret and I ain't telling you yet."

Just before Christmas the secret was out. Herding a group into the auditorium to a more or less rhythmic march I glanced at the school band and nearly lost my presence of mind sufficiently to let Paul sit next to Dorothy, which would have been distinctly unwise. Standing straight, yes, *straight*, behind the bass drum was Robert, eyes glued on Miss S, thumping away in perfect time, if with unnecessary vigor.

Eager inquiries after assembly showed he had been at it for a month and had made good progress. Miss S told me, "I can depend on that boy to be here for rehearsals, but he is awfully rude." Upon being complimented, Robert shifted from one foot to another and merely said "Yeah".

By this time everyone was talking about the improvement, how nice he was (sometimes), and how sad it was he was so physically handicapped. Everyone urged him to wear glasses, wrote notes to his mother urg-

ing her to get them for him, and finally he got glasses. His work picked up some more.

It was in February that a splendid example of the fairness of children in assigning praise came out. Two rooms, the poorest groups, were responsible for an assembly program. As planned it required one pupil to read from the platform a series of articles on great people born during the month. The children, asked for suggestions on a reader who would do the class credit, yelled "Robert".

Facing five hundred of your peers is an ordeal, and I admit that despite successful rehearsals my heart was in my mouth, especially when our principal said as she looked at the program, "Robert! You mean Robert Kennedy?"

Assured that we did, she said further, "I wonder. Do you think he can do it?"

After school the day of the program, he lingered for a moment. "Say, Miss B—the principal, you know—told me she was proud of me, the way I read and all." To which I replied, "Of course, we are all proud of you, Robert."

There is not much more to tell, but I can't resist one little anecdote.

A discussion of transportation brought up the topic of the old square riggers. Appealed to on a technicality, I differentiated between barque, brig, and brigantine, ending up with the statement that of a long line of seafaring folks, my father was the last one who went down with his ship.

The next morning Robert came in early and put on my desk a little balsa wood model of a three master, crude, unsteady, but recognizable. "Here, Miss Coombs," he said, "I made it for you last night. I thought maybe you'd like it with your father being drowned and all."

This year Robert is in the eighth grade and his homeroom teacher hasn't much imagination. So at times I feel constrained to remind him how much I believe in him, and we progress from a series of grunts to a "Mebbe", "Yeah", and "O.K., Miss

Coombs." Then all is peace again for a couple of weeks.

As a conclusion to the whole matter, or perhaps as a glimpse into the future, let me tell you an incident that happened this fall. In the Sunshine Super Market I fell over one of the smaller Summers children (there are eight of them, all looking alike). When I had picked myself and the child up, Mrs. Summers and the oldest girl were at my elbow, talking a blue streak. (I take no credit for the Summers' case, that goes to the nurse.) Amid the various topics of conver-

sation this item sticks in my mind:

"And how that school does good! Now you look at Robert, such a boy as he was. I must say I never seen no such change as in that boy, and he comes and sees my Helen now, and we're glad to have him, ain't we, Helen?"

I looked at Helen's trim figure and sweet smile, but I saw six feet of young manhood striding down the school corridor, head up, skin clear, eyes meeting mine straight, and heard the familiar "Hi ya, Miss Coombs" of the boy who found himself.



## \* \* \* FINDINGS \* \* \*

**LANGUAGES:** The 20th century boom-peak of Latin as a high-school subject was hit in 1900, when 51% of all pupils studied it. The figure had dropped to 38% in 1915, and on down to 16% in 1934. On the other hand, all modern languages enrolled 22% of high-school pupils in 1900, pulled almost even with Latin in 1915 with 36% (their 20th century peak so far) but had dropped to 20% in 1934. These figures are quoted from the U. S. Office of Education's 1938 report by James B. Tharp in *Modern Language Journal*. Mr. Tharp gloomily predicts that further drops in both branches will be seen when the report on 1940 comes out.

**NEGROES:** The low standard of living of Negroes, due to limited opportunities, is the cause for continued inferiority in educational work for the majority of Negro students, according to a survey made by Herman G. Canady, reported in *School and Society*. He divided the 497 students of West Virginia State College for Negroes into three

groups, according to economic and social backgrounds, and found that the highest grades went to the group with highest family backgrounds. Intelligence test scores tended to follow the same pattern.

**CITIZENSHIP:** What are high-school seniors thinking about politics and political activity? Some 9,000 high-school seniors in 84 New York State high schools recently answered a questionnaire on this subject for Dr. Herman C. Beyle, of Syracuse University. About 3 of every 4 pupils stated a preference for some political party, reports the *New York Times*. But the party preference of a pupil agreed with that of his father or guardian in only 58% of the cases. Of every 7 pupils, 6 said they had never been urged to become active in politics. It was usually a teacher who had urged the seventh pupil—but that's still a low batting average for teachers.

**CONSERVATION:** Little information on the causes of depletion, restoration, and conservation of wildlife is entering the public schools in textbooks, reports P. A. Davies in *School and Society*. From more than 1,000 elementary- and high-school textbooks sent to Kentucky for possible adoption, the author selected and analyzed 80 that contained some information on some phase of our natural resources. Findings: 35 social-science books averaging 620 pages each devoted an average of less than 1 page to causes of depletion, restoration, and conservation of wildlife; 24 general-science books averaging 556 pages, less than 1 page each; 12 biological books averaging 677 pages, 6 pages each; 9 agriculture books averaging 464 pages, nothing at all on the subject.



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *Good, bad, indifferent, or important, there is a great amount of counting studies and other research going on in the field of education. We think readers will be interested in brief, unqualified summaries of some main points in some of the findings. Lack of space prohibits much explanation of methods used, degree of accuracy or conclusiveness, and sometimes even the scope of the study. Readers granting such limitations may find these flashes in the pan interesting, provocative—sometimes amusing.*

## ➤ IDEAS IN BRIEF ➤

### Practical ideas selected and condensed from articles in state and specialized educational journals

#### *I Exploited Athletes*

The poetry unit was here again, and I needed some means of arousing the interest of a class that considered poetry sissy. Luckily, I remembered a football poem written by Howard, a popular half-back in Parma Schaaf High (Parma, Ohio) the year before. I read it—and the boys straightened and unwound their feet, already locked for a dreamy 40-minute rest. They remembered Howard—no keener man on the field. Did I have more poems by real fellows? I produced "Blessed Event", written that very morning by the current baseball idol. From that moment on I didn't have to arouse interest in versifying. The pupils started composing and poems kept rolling in after the poetry unit was over. In fact, poetry-writing became a school fad. It was "the thing" to pass along the newest poems, openly in homerooms, surreptitiously in study hall.—EDITH FORSYTHE in *Ohio Schools*.

#### *Community Garden Contest*

Two biology classes of Wells High School, Chicago, really started something last year—a Community Garden Contest open to residents in the area of the city which the school considered its own. The project was so successful in arousing the enthusiasm of school and community, and drawing them closer together, that it is being continued this year. After a visiting specialist's talk to the classes on types of plants and grasses most likely to thrive in the community, he suggested that we visit the neighborhood gardens, and perhaps open a garden contest. The biology pupils excitedly began to make plans. As gardens would be in full bloom in September, the 20th was picked as the climax of the contest. Committees were formed. The publicity committee wrote stories for the papers, and arranged for posters from the art department. Another group solicited donations for prizes from local merchants. The community area was mapped, and pupils were assigned to visit eligible garden owners and distribute entry blanks. By judging time, 43 gardens had been entered to be appraised by four members of the city park department, who were accompanied by a committee of pupils. On the final day, biology pupils entertained the contest winners in the social room.—DELORES GLOWINSKI and others in *Chicago Schools Journal*.

#### *We Visit Good Teachers*

Every year Copenhagen, N.Y., Central School has a planned visiting day for its teachers. Each teacher goes to some school in the state that is highly recommended for work in the teacher's own field, regardless of how far away it is. After returning from his visit, the teacher writes a critical report of the work he has observed, and general discussions are held in one or more teachers' meetings. I sometimes think such a day, with its careful planning and follow-up, is worth more to the teacher than most conferences and conventions. Each sees work in which he is interested and has problems, and has a chance to discuss those problems with outstanding teachers.—MILO E. LACY in *New York State Education*.

#### *English Teacher Cooperates*

"Do you mean we may read books in this class for any other class we are taking in school and get credit for this in English as well as in the other class?" A junior-English-class pupil was speaking. "Yes, and you may write papers here for any other class, and prepare talks that you will give there and give them here first," I answered.

So we were off to a new deal in English in Broadway High School (Seattle, Wash.). Teachers were consulted about possible projects; department heads offered credit for papers, talks and reading, where such activities had not been before; librarians dug up material for the researchers. A music department folk-song concert was augmented by talks, biographies, and pictures by the music lovers from the English class. Special projects for the industrial arts and home-economics departments were prepared by my English class pupils. For most of the work pupils arranged with their teachers to receive credit in both departments.

Pupils prepared for school activities in my class—assembly speeches, parliamentary procedure for a club president, a story for a short-story club. A basketball-team member even used the period to explain plays to a second-team member suddenly called upon to substitute that night. (The skies did not fall!)

What about actual training in English skills? The pupils showed me ideas I hadn't thought about. Each one gave me a bibliography of books, maga-



zine articles, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, and poetry, on his subject. There was omnivorous reading, and some improvement in standards of discrimination. We had a good deal of oral work, including outlines and bibliographies for each talk, and each pupil did one rather long paper, which in most cases was turned in to another class. The pupils did their own checking of errors in style, delivery technique and grammar during the oral work, and corrected one another's written work before passing it on to me. I felt that our "integration" experiment had more than succeeded.—MARGARET WALTHAM in *The English Journal*.

### *The Pupils Gained Weight*

Early last school year Grand Terrace Union School, San Bernardino County, Calif., began serving orange juice to its pupils in the middle of the morning. Equipment, labor, and oranges were all donated. During the cold months we found that the orange-juice program greatly reduced the number of colds.

While this project was going on we started to serve hot noon lunches. The Bureau of Surplus Commodities provided us with staples and other foods on the surplus list, we bought equipment, and starting with donated labor by mothers, we progressed to a WPA cooking force of three. The lunches now pay for themselves, and we purchase needed foods not on the surplus list from local merchants. We have also augmented the mid-morning orange juice with cookies and fruits. Since we have no cafeteria we put tables in the auditorium, next to the kitchen, and stagger noon lunch periods so that all eight grades can be served. Children may ask for second helpings, even thirds. Those who can pay five cents, others nothing.

Hot noon lunches are not news, of course, however uncommon our mid-morning snack plan may be. But the marked increase in weight that they have caused in our pupils may be news to you. The average gain in weight per month is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  pounds. One child showed an increase of 10 pounds in one month, another 25 pounds in 3 months. And absences from school have dropped to a notable degree.—ROLAND R. ADAMS in *Sierra Educational News*.

### *Downtown Health Display*

Last spring the homemaking classes of Sapulpa, Okla., High School placed in downtown business windows displays showing the values of good homemaking in relation to health. There were six displays, each remaining in a window for one week. The homemaking classes were divided into groups of four, and each group was responsible for one

window. The theme of the first exhibit was "Food in National Defense", of the second, "Foods We Need Each Day", the third, "Child Health", the fourth, "Positive Health", the fifth, "Safety in the Home", and the last, "Health Habits". So for six weeks the people of Sapulpa enjoyed an excellent example of visual education, and pupils in the homemaking classes derived great benefit from the project.—R. ELIZABETH REYNOLDS in *The Oklahoma Teacher*.

### *Our Letter Service*

Realizing the barrenness of most letter-writing assignments, my Berlin, N.H., Senior High School commercial pupils and I organized a letter service for teachers. We made memorandum pads, each with an attractive cover bearing the words "Letter Service", and a decoration by the artistic members of the group. A pad went to each teacher, along with a letter asking if that teacher would try Letter Service, a student aid to busy teachers and a practical exercise for commercial pupils.

The letter outlined the following program: Pupils would compose any business letters desired and return them, correctly typed with one duplicate, within twenty-four hours unless some unexpected change in the school program made a longer time necessary. The teacher might jot necessary information for writing the letters in the memo pad, or might place in it any letters to be answered, having noted the replies on them. Each day a pupil would call for assignments during a certain period, and could avoid interrupting the teacher's work by consulting the memo booklet.

Many teachers used the service—at first only to help the pupils, later because it was really helpful to them too. My class wrote many letters of inquiry, adjustment, and orders, and occasionally a letter requiring more originality.—THELMA E. DICKSON in *The English Journal*.

### *Builders Together*

Industrial-arts pupils of Benham, Ky., High School perform many useful services to the school and the student body. Largest project: dismantling an old and unused wooden church building, and using the materials to construct a student center for the school. The new building was planned to contain a party room, model kitchen, and various other features to make a complete recreation center for the young people. School furniture and other equipment pours out of the industrial-arts shop to order.—Condensed from *Learning the Ways of Democracy*.

# EXCHANGE AFAR:

It's easier than you may think

By  
GRACE LAWRENCE

MANY OF US are interested in the magic word "exchange", but do not know how one is brought about. We read of a teacher who has returned from a year's teaching in Japan or of another who has gone to England. At bridge club some one gives us a delightful bit she has gleaned from a letter written by a friend on exchange in a Standard Oil School in South America. It is always the other fellow who is having the thrilling time and we wonder wistfully why we couldn't have been the teacher selected to go.

Actually there is little or no selection. Applicants for exchange, surprisingly, are so few, that if you know where you wish to teach, the opportunity is practically yours.

There are two possibilities in determining the destination. Probably there is an inquiry from a distant school on your bulletin board that you answer, or you may have your heart set on spending a year in Texas. You make out a list of cities in the order of your choice, with Laredo at the head. Now you see your superintendent, and when he asks "Where would you like to go?" you bring out the list.

He secures the approval of the board and starts a correspondence with the superintendents of the cities you have listed. Some morning at school he calls you to say there are letters from Laredo and Baton Rouge; make your choice and call him soon.

You weigh every bit of available information on both cities—Laredo on the Mexican border, bandits, gambling, color, excitement—Baton Rouge, the deep south, educational opportunities, 'Cajun culture. Color will be exhausted in two weeks and ante-bellum history tips the scale, so you phone him and he chuckles when you say, "It's Baton Rouge."

You weigh every bit of available information on both cities—Laredo on the Mexican border, bandits, gambling, color, excitement—Baton Rouge, the deep south, educational opportunities, 'Cajun culture. Color will be exhausted in two weeks and ante-bellum history tips the scale, so you phone him and he chuckles when you say, "It's Baton Rouge."

"If you had chosen Texas, I'd have changed your mind. I'm afraid some cowboy'd get you!"

When the superintendents meet in Atlantic City in the early spring he completes the arrangements. You'll have middle sections in history in a junior-high seventh grade, and he brings you back the name of your exchange.

You write to her and get full details. You want to know the text they are using so you can get acquainted with it during the summer. Can she suggest a place for you to room and board, and how much will it cost? What clothes are necessary—will you need any heavy winter coats and suits? You tell her what she'll need north of the Mason and Dixon line.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Miss Lawrence recently spent a year in a Louisiana high school, as an exchange teacher from Linden, N.J., High School. In this article she explains how to go about getting such an exchange arrangement, and states that the matter is much simpler and easier than most teachers may suppose. This applies to exchanges within the United States. As announced in a news item on page 64 of the September 1941 CLEARING HOUSE, exchanges with schools in other nations are limited at present, but the U. S. Office of Education plans a more extensive program of exchanges with Latin American countries in the future. In the meantime, you might think about the Florida East Coast, or that region "somewhere West of Laramie".

Are you planning to go south by bus or rail or boat or plane? You call Cook's or the ticket agent to find the comparative costs. Your nearest Gulf and Esso stations furnish maps in case you plan to drive. They have marked in red the scenic routes and the shortest route. For weeks you browse over folders and maps and squeeze out every bit of delight each one affords in anticipation.

You are driving through Memphis and snapping pictures of the slave market; you

are leaving the plane at New Orleans while the steward smiles at your Yankee accent; the bus has stopped in Baltimore in a street of marble steps; a Portuguese man o' war dips by your bow in the Chesapeake—you take another folder.

Or perhaps your exchange will take you through another section of the country than did my one-year trading of positions with a Louisiana high school teacher. But anyway you will be off on a refreshing professional adventure.



## Recently They Said

### *I'd Like to Suggest*

Ideas for school buildings and equipment:

Make all teachers' desks with paper-length pigeon holes running down one side, two rows, reaching nearly to the floor. The papers for each class can thus be kept separate.

Provide a full-length mirror somewhere in a school hall, so that pupils and teachers can check their own posture and general appearance.—LUCRETIA MONEY in *Mississippi Educational Advance*.

### *Shakespeare without Aspirin*

I have always felt my theater would achieve its purpose if it could do but one thing: combat the dislike for Shakespeare engendered by schoolteachers.—BUTLER DAVENPORT in *Pic*.

### *Xmas Jobs for Pupils*

Retail stores the country over probably will enjoy the biggest buying spree on record this Christmas. And that means jobs by the thousands for young people to sell, wrap, and deliver everything from juke boxes to jelly beans.

Department stores and local shops aren't the only "possibles" in Santa's job-bag. By the end of November, the post office will have enrolled over 170,000 additional recruits to sort and deliver Uncle Sam's peak load of Christmas-time mail. Young men may get such "rush jobs" even if their names aren't planted on a civil service list. *But it takes an early application to bring home the bacon!*

In addition to tackling these fields for Christmas work, young people may also try to get placed in

the service occupations and in the manufacturing of toys and novelties. Or they may set themselves up in a temporary business and sell Christmas items "on their own hook".—*Vocational Trends*.

### *War Dollars Ruin Teachers*

Teachers' salaries can be reduced in two ways—by payment of fewer dollars or by payment of the same number of dollars with reduced purchasing power. Price increases bring about reductions in salaries by reducing the purchasing power of the dollar. Rising prices during the last World War reduced teachers to the poverty level, although there was no actual reduction in the number of dollars paid.—ARVID J. BURKE in *New York State Education*.

### *Blunders in Grading*

A photostat of a student's geometry paper was submitted to 116 high-school mathematics teachers. After these papers had been graded, a tabulation of the results showed that the same paper had been marked all the way from 28 per cent to 92 per cent.

A group of superintendents and principals were given facsimile copies of a fourth-grade arithmetic paper with instructions to grade them. Here again, the marks for the same paper varied from zero to 94 per cent. . . .

A pupil was taking a course in composition. . . . For a number of weeks he had succeeded in passing off some of DeMaupassant's short stories as his own. The teacher had been grading the literary gems of this great writer as "B" work. He thought them "good" but not "exceptional".—MORRIS DEAN in *Michigan Education Journal*.

# Every Teacher an

By  
C. G. HANNAFORD

# ENGLISH TEACHER

IT WAS probably four or five years ago. The class had just ended; I had sat back with deep elation. After weeks of effort my pupils in composition had reached the point where, in a test, they had not only found all errors but had actually written clear explanations of the mistakes. It was an achievement undoubtedly, and I relaxed in pleasant exhaustion. Scraps of conversation drifted to me as the pupils walked out:

"Sure was hard."

"Yeah, I was real scared most of the time."

I became alert.

"You come in late again, didn't you?"

"Sort of late, I guess. There was so many kids in the hall I couldn't hardly get by."

Gone my class, gone my joy, gone my illusions. Bitterly I criticized to myself the pupils who, capable of using excellent English, kept on talking as they had before they ever saw my class.

After that I listened unobtrusively to in-



EDITOR'S NOTE: "For the past dozen years," writes the author, "I have been a teacher of English composition at the West Seattle High School, Seattle, Wash. I have been seeking constantly some magic formula whereby the general language level could be raised, as it most certainly should be. Now I question the existence of such a formula. The solution is more likely to rest upon common sense, which I have tried to apply in this article." When all of the departments, all of the teachers, contribute toward an improved language environment, the author believes that pupils will respond. Improvement of language skills is not the responsibility solely of the English department.

formal pupil conversations. Everywhere I found the same result: a standard of English that was perfectly indifferent to all that our department was doing. I rebelled at being futile. There must be something that we could do.

Since then my composition classes have changed steadily. More and more writing has come in; more and more grammar has gone out. We talk about mistakes when they occur in themes or talks. If they don't occur, we don't talk about them.

Now there is a stirring of movement in our system. The English curriculum is being studied with the object of revision. It is time for English teachers to examine what they are doing. I don't believe there will be any great pressure to return to formal grammar; nevertheless we who offer something else must present a philosophy and a program that will justify what we are doing.

If young people get their language from English teachers, why do they continue to use poor English? The question is absurd because of the conditional "if". *Young people do not get their language from English teachers.* Here is a fact easily proved, which still has not been pursued to its logical issue: where do people get their language and what can schools do about it there?

We get our language from our environment: our homes, playmates and acquaintances, Sunday School, movies, radio, papers, books, schools. Words that come to our eyes or ears often enough become ours. That goes for the way words are used in sentences too. Our language is the result of non-conscious imitation; few indeed are the people who exercise conscious control over what they write or speak. No one will deny that there are constant forces molding



our language, and the strength of these forces lies in the fact that we are not aware of what is happening.

The schools play a part; of course they do. And in the schools the chief part is played by English teachers. But estimate the total effect of all the other environmental factors and you begin to understand the difficulties. The average high-school pupil does not spend much of his school day in talking or writing under an English teacher's scrutiny. Probably his time wouldn't average a half hour a day. Now consider all the informal talking, reading and writing from the time he gets up to the time he goes to bed. Toss in all the vacations, especially the long summer one. Then it begins to be clear that the school does not occupy a major part of the environment from which young people get their language habits.

This may be disquieting, but at least it clears away a lot of accumulated rubbish and gives us reality. And with one question answered—where do people get their language—we are ready to examine the other, what can schools do about it there? For we believe that although schools can never completely control language environment, they can be masters over a major part of it.

There are two fundamentals. First, the schools must more fully utilize the hours during which young people are in attendance. Second, schools must reach out into that other part of the young people's lives. These thoughts need to be expanded.

The school will increase three-fold or four-fold its influence upon language habits when every class, regardless of subject matter, becomes an English class, at least in a sense. This is no new idea. Yet there are many teachers who still do not accept that attitude. They have one hour a day for a semester or two to accomplish a task. They are expected to succeed. Why shouldn't the English teacher be expected also to succeed, especially since English in some form is offered from the earliest grades?

Every teacher an English teacher—is there a case for this concept? If there is, other teachers can generally be depended upon to cooperate. Otherwise . . .

There is a case. There are at least two excellent reasons why all teachers should contribute to language standards.

First, language is used more than any other tool. No matter what other subject may be considered, it does not even closely rival the continued use by everybody of language. The fact is too obvious to require elaboration. It does not indicate that we must worship language, but it does explain why the subject must receive more time and attention than others.

The second reason is more complicated. It is this: English teachers face a problem which is unlike that faced by other teachers. Here again we bump into environment, particularly the external environment of pupils. It can be demonstrated that this external environment contributes to the *success* of teaching other subjects, but it is more likely to contribute to the *failure* of the teaching of English.

We illustrate by considering the teaching of mathematics. What attitude will the pupil take toward mathematics outside the classroom, and what attitude on the part of others will he meet? If he is buying something, receiving change, planning expenses for a trip, budgeting an income or allowance, or doing anything else that requires any kind of mathematics, will he have an indifferent, who-cares attitude? Will his friends have? Of course not. The penalty is too sure. If he takes his friends on a trip and miscalculates the amount of gasoline needed and they have to get home as best they can, you can be sure that he will be no hero, to himself or to his friends. Personal and social pressures insist upon accuracy.

How about science? Outside the classroom it is held in general respect. The law of gravitation allows no fooling around, and everybody knows it. And the youthful ama-

teur photographer, chemist, or radio builder doesn't scoff at what he has learned. He uses it. There can be no other way if he wants success. Listen in on any group of boys who are interested in some project that requires scientific knowledge and skill. Using strikingly ungrammatical language (without any loss of prestige), they will flay the bungler of an experiment.

Commercial courses, industrial courses, art courses, music courses—the pupils who take them expect to apply outside the class the things they learn in the class. And the people outside expect it too.

With social-science teachers the story is somewhat different. When they attempt to teach principles and intelligent citizenship, they see their pupils swayed by an external environment that too often is dominated by predatory, unsocial ideologies. There is likewise the discouraging fact that the world has not advanced far toward intelligent control. If it is true that social-science teachers can do much to improve language habits, it is also true that English teachers can do much to further the aims of the social-science classes.

Generally speaking, however, it should be clear that most non-language courses are assisted by a benevolent external environment. But the English courses? What do they face?

There is the home, perhaps the most important single factor. It is probably true that in the majority of homes the youngsters still hear most of the errors that English teachers try to wipe out. In the numerous language situations of the family, unawareness is the kindest term. Also, we often have a large foreign element. And economic stagnation has influenced language standards just as it has everything else.

Then there is the "gang"—not necessarily a band of toughs either. The young person gravitates toward it. "Sissies" and "pansies" are scorned. Good language habits? Let's move on.

The adolescent period is one of tremen-

dous imitation. Movie stars, a pal, anybody—the youngster apes every gesture, every word. What others say, he says. Their slang is his slang.

It is also a period of indifference to cultural matters. There is too much to do: sports, puppy love, shows. Usually there is no conscious antagonism to higher standards; it's just that nobody ever thinks of it.

These constitute only a part of the total, but they suggest certainly that the presentation of desirable language skills often faces a deliberately or accidentally hostile environment. Hence our original statement that English teachers face a problem unlike that of other teachers is justified. Under such circumstances, other teachers should stand ready to cooperate.

What should they do? Primarily they are teachers of other subjects, and they do not have much time. *But a few things generally practiced can do wonders.* Written work of some sort should be necessary in all classes, though some need not have a large amount of it. Regular standards should be upheld concerning use of ink, reasonable legibility, and good margins. Common symbols should be adopted and used to mark misspellings, gross errors, and important mistakes in punctuation. It is possible to use such symbols without adding to the time given to the reading of papers. Faculties should likewise reach an agreement on what oral errors are important enough to be challenged wherever they occur.

The effect of such a program upon pupils would be enormous. English would no longer be something to be considered only in one class; it would be the acceptable medium of expression in all classes. The entire school environment would be at work in the creation of language skills.

As for the English classes themselves, what should they do? Become laboratories? Laboratories of some sort there will have to be, as the teachers of other subjects can hardly be expected to take time for explanations; their contribution will be an insist-

ence upon certain standards. But suppose that English classes spend all or a major part of their time on explanation and drill. *It should be borne in mind that under such a system the efforts of the school would be dealing only with that part of the child's environment which is exposed to the school.* There is another part, an essential part, which also must be reached before language work will begin to make general progress.

Each English department must have a program that adequately presents laboratory material. Yet the major part of its classes should be open to three emphases: reading, talking, and writing. These three should be examined to see how they can assist in controlling a greater part of the pupils' non-school environment.

Reading is now the chief source of acquiring new words. It also contributes greatly to language habits. The important thing is to put reading, enjoyable reading, in the home. The books should start on the pupil's level and gradually rise in quality; if they are well chosen pupils will begin to devote, voluntarily, that daily hour or half hour to reading, thus forming an influence which will be far superior to the one it supersedes. The habit of reading—who can estimate its total effect?

#### EMPHASIS ON TALKING

Since we all talk far more than we write, emphasis should likewise be placed on talking: conversations, formal speeches, informal talks, panel discussions, and so on. For source material the pupils would go to books, magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias, etc. Much of the preparation would be done at home, so that these different reference materials would become part of the home equipment. Thus oral work would supplement literature to create habits of reading in varied fields.

The third emphasis in English classes should be on writing of all kinds. There should be papers on experiences, on human

relationships, on conversation, on problems, on everyday living. Many of these papers should be written in the home, or the material gathered there. In this work the pupil does not sit and absorb what somebody else has written; he becomes creative and does it himself. His daily activities and environment should be the main sources of his writing. *In this way, language goes out of the school and invades every external stronghold.*

#### LANGUAGE HABITS

There is another factor too. People do not develop good speech habits by knowing about language; *they develop such habits by using language.* Every time a pupil faces a class to give a talk or read a paper he is using language, and his classmates determine his success by the way he uses it. Consequently, emphasis on talking and writing not only gives us our best method of dealing with a pupil's whole environment, but also greatly enhances the formation of higher standards in the English classroom itself. There is gain everywhere.

Advancing civilization has always required a constantly expanding skill in language. Today there are many prophets to warn that if civilization is to withstand the blows it is receiving, there must be a growth in ethical and cultural fields that will enable these fields to keep pace with scientific development. Such a future will place new demands upon language skill. It will be well, then, for schools to make themselves ready; indeed, the schools must lead.

We do not mean merely in language. What good can English do for people with empty heads or shallow lives? There must be an upsurge of the spiritual, the ethical, the moral, call it what you will. The task confronts us. As we attack it, let us remember the part that language can play. Let us remember to reach out into the complete environment of the child. Miracles are hard things to perform, and the hour is late; still, if we don't do it, who will?

# THE EDUCATIONAL WHIRL

*A department of satire and sharp comment*

*Contributors:* LAURENCE B. JOHNSON, R. ELIZABETH REYNOLDS, CARR SANDERS, ALAN WHYTE, FRANK I. GARY, HELEN C. SILL, EFFA E. PRESTON, LOIS STEWART, JOSEPH BURTON VASCHÉ, RUSSELL V. BURKHARD, DOUGLAS S. WARD, and MAUDE DEXTER.

Always cuss your education; then you can fail because of it, or succeed in spite of it. L. B. J.

## *Our Flag*

Intentions are mighty fine things. I am sure that my pupils who wrote the following comments on "What the Flag Means to Me" had good intentions:

"I enjoy knowing that the United States is the last Democratic Nation in the world."

"Because it (the flag) alone stands for life, liberty, and also a suit of happiness."

"The soldiers which fight and die in battle—they alone are glad to be able to save the country and the flag, which holds their sweethearts, wives, children and all from some deadly hand of death and poison."

"In the first years of school the teachers teach us the 'Pledge of a Legions'."

"A nation where the people may worship, go, say, and do what they want to as long as they stay within the law. A nation where you can curse the President out, and all he can do is curse you back, or go fishing."

R. E. R.

## *The Camel's Back*

*Schoolboard Member:* "I do think teachers should take the opportunity for voluntary participation in and support of community activities."

*Notice on the Faculty Bulletin Board six days later:* "Mrs. Schoolboard Member has tickets for sale for the play which will help our scholarship

fund. All teachers are expected to support the play." No notices of like nature were posted in factories, dental offices, banks, or post offices. Were the scholarships for the teachers? C. S.

## *Principal Scowler*

"I was quite concerned when the faculty elected a trouble-making teacher as the president of their organization," admitted Phil Scowler.

"But I soon discovered a good way to turn the faculty against him—I assigned him some administrative tasks, gave him a title, and an extra \$50 raise."

A. W.

*Tessie to Tilly:* "If the Board of Education continues this progressive program next year, the least that it can do for the faculty is to furnish every teacher a set of ear plugs."

F. I. G.

## *Junior Politics*

The School Library Club was in a bad state. By ones and twos and threes the members approached the librarian and told their story, "If we have to have Tony for president, we don't want to belong."

"But," protested the librarian, "you elected him! What's the trouble?"

Finally a more candid member admitted, "Well, he thinks that just because he is so good looking, he doesn't have to do anything!"

At last Tony, a sad and chastened pupil, arrived and agreed that for the good of all, he had better resign and make way for another election.

Election day came and all the members seated themselves about the club's long table: John, the leader of the opposition, at one end, and Tony at the other. The original vice-president alone was absent. Nominations began in parliamentary form, when suddenly—and not according to "Robert's Rules of Order"—the opposition leader called down

EDITOR'S NOTE: Among the contributors to this department are superintendents, high-school principals, and teachers. The educators whose writings appear here almost invariably have a serious point to make, but have chosen satire and humor as more effective methods of making that point. The editors of THE CLEARING HOUSE do not necessarily endorse the points of view expressed here.



the table to Tony, "If you'll vote for me for vice-president, I'll vote for you for president." Agreed.

Election proceeded and the secretary's record read: "President, Tony; vice-president, John; secretary-treasurer, Henry (same as before)." And the club went merrily on from November to June, one of the finest, most cooperative units in the school!

H. C. S.

My grandmother says, "Life woulda been happier for a lotta people if some psychologists had been dropped on their heads when they were babies." What makes grandmother think they weren't?

E. E. P.

### Point of View

To quote J. F. Boyse: "It would be to great advantage to some schoolmasters if they would steal two hours a day from their pupils, and give their own minds the benefit of the robbery."

Unquote: Maybe Mr. Boyse didn't know there were some school boards, then as now, who could see only two words standing out in his whole suggestion: 'STEAL' and 'ROBBERY'.

L. S.

### New Pinch-Hitter

The new-fangled home-recording outfits open up many possibilities to ingenious schoolfolks. The next time you want an early start to the city on Friday afternoon, you might leave one of your 30-minute transcriptions for the kids to play. But you better be sure the machine isn't running backwards, because if it is you'll not see anything funny about the guffaws which will greet you when you spin the dial the first thing Monday morning. J. B. V.

When two educators meet it's an I for an I.

E. E. P.

### We Need to Educate:

The kibitzer who says, "You should have bid four spades."

The smokers who have everything but matches and tobacco.

The sneezer who uses a handkerchief merely to keep his keys from chaffing holes in his pocket.

The arch designer who arranges the Detour signs.

The double parker who bottlenecks streets.

The unspeakable who must spin the revolving doors.

The gum chewer in the movies.

That bold woman at the grocery counter who puts you from first to fifth place, and the blind clerk who lets her get away with it.

That Jack-ass who left the opened sardine can in one of nature's beauty spots.

The devoid-of-all-sportsmanship type who sends you a bill with one-cent postage due.

The jackrabbit who gives you the horn when your car doesn't catapult at the green light.

The second cousin who, with touching emotion, asks for a loan when company is around.

The foursome that won't signal you through when three of the quartet have lost balls.

That paragon of thrift who carries bills of such large denominations that you must pay for his phones, sundries, papers, and postage.

The injured innocent in the elevator who thinks you should be able to tell what floor he wanted to get off at.

The pitiless one who calls your bluff when you have forgotten his name.

The parent who swallows every word of her offspring as the gospel truth.

The principal.

The teacher.

R. V. B.

### Dr. Blown in a Jam

Dr. Blown, Buster I., our superintendent, was a little too defense-conscious. He issued too many teaching contracts for this fall.

Of course his hope was that the draft and lucrative industrial jobs in distant cities would trim out the trouble-making fringe of last year's faculty. But the idea backfired—and here is Dr. Blown with all those contracts. Holder High is stuffed to the corridors with teachers. (Not to mention the junior high and the grade schools, which Dr. Blown seldom does.)

This may have something to do with the rumor that Dr. Blown is considering a "very attractive offer" in a very defense industry. Dr. Blown hopes there is some way out.

D. S. W.

### Loves Me, Loves Me Not

This is right out of the horse's mouth—the opinions about us teachers as gathered from 235 pupils, and duly reported in a recent educational-journal article. The youngsters listed 22 reasons for disliking their teachers, and only 10 reasons for liking them.

You can see how hopeless the whole business is. The odds are more than 2 to 1 against us. M. D.

# Toward Bigger *and* Better

*I let my pupils bring  
funny books to class*

## “COMIC MAGS.”

By IRVING R. FRIEDMAN

IT WAS the last week of the semester. I told my classes that for a leisure reading period the following day they could bring their own books to class.

“May we bring funny books?” one bold pupil inquired.

Eyes were focused upon me in anticipation of a reprimand to the audacious pupil. Funny books were considered tabu by most teachers. Pupils knew very well that several teachers had noted the avidity with which pupils read funny books in preference to prescribed reading and, therefore, either confiscated them or seized them, returning them at the close of the day. They were surprised when I replied, “Bring any books you wish.”

The next day the room was deluged with funny books. Then I decided that I would

make use of this menace to ascertain the power exerted by these colorful comic books upon modern adolescents. What charm did they possess to make non-readers read, to make boisterous pupils sit quietly, to make traditional teachers become bewildered, disconcerted, and even resentful?

I selected 150 pupils in grades 7 to 9, ranging in ages from 12 to 16, and asked them to write answers to the following questions:

1. Why do you read funny books?
2. Which funny book do you like best?
3. Describe your favorite character.
4. What sections of the funny books, other than the comics, do you read?
5. How often do you purchase funny books and how much do you pay for them?
6. Are funny books funny?

The results of the survey were illuminating. Of the 150 questioned, there was not one who did not read funny books. Pupils said they enjoyed reading them because the books were “colorful”, “humorous”, “interesting”, “adventurous”, “picturesque”, “thrilling”, “exciting”, “wonderful”, “entertaining”, and “a good way to pass the time”.

One pupil said, “I like to read funny books because they show different ways criminals try to commit crimes and how they fail.”

Another said, “If school books were put into the form of funny books, I think I would enjoy them more than I do funny books.”

“I like funny books,” commented one youth, “because they keep a boy like me out of mischief and show that crime does not pay.”

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *The science-fiction magazines undoubtedly spawned Superman into the newspaper strips. And what Superman spawned into the flood of comic magazines is the nightmare in which hundreds of thousands of our pupils seem to be living a strange secret life. Bat Men, magicians, marvelous captains, and super-Herculean creatures leap sky-high, swim oceans, and smash steel walls. They overflow the news stands, pop up behind history books, bewitch and lure pupils from their geometry assignments, and generally get in teachers' hair. What then? The author had his pupils bring their comic magazines to class and discussed the whole business with them. Here he reports his reflections—and some ideas. Mr. Friedman teaches in Cleveland Junior High School, Newark, N.J.*

"I like Human Torch because he flies through the air demolishing all enemies of the law in an exciting, thrilling way," admitted a twelve-year-old.

Still another said, "It is thrilling to find a comic-book favorite valiantly fighting for democracy."

There are more than 74 funny book publications on the market today, ranging in themes from Sports, Jungle Stories, Detective Mysteries and Adventure to Americanism, Anti-Hitlerism, Fantasy, Flash, and Uncle Sam. There are, moreover, hundreds of strange, exciting characters portrayed. Among them Superman ranks supreme. Other comic-strip characters the pupils listed as prime favorites were the Bat-Man, U.S.A., Captain America, the Human Torch, Mandrake the Magician, Dick Tracy, the Golden Arrow, and, of course, the comic personalities appearing on the "funnies" page of local newspapers, which for years have been the favorites of children and adults alike.

In addition to the "unfunny" comic strips themselves, pupils mentioned the following sections of the funny book which they enjoyed reading: Biographies, strange things about animals, puzzles, facts about history, "Strange As It Seems", and the stamp section.

The amount of money that each child spends for funny books varies. It is arresting to note that many deprive themselves of an afternoon in the movies or of an ice-cream soda in order to purchase a funny book. The majority of pupils, according to the survey, buy one ten-cent book each month. One girl said she purchased as many as three in a day.

Most boys and girls indulge in an enterprise of exchanging used copies with their classmates and friends, and this process is often a complicated system of barter, borrowing, and transfer. Furthermore, several small stores buy and sell used books. There are two such establishments in the immediate vicinity of our school, which sell noth-

ing but funny books and in which a child may buy old issues for as little as two or three cents.

These stores are visited by a great many boys and girls each day. Here one can see animated youngsters, wearing gleeful, joyous expressions, as they bargain profusely and vociferously for their favorite funny books.

The conclusions to be arrived at as a result of this investigation are manifold. Whether we teachers like it or not, funny books are just as potent a force today as were the dime novel, Nick Carter, and Horatio Alger in our own day. In fact, many of the characters depicted in cartoons are manifesting themselves in other media, such as the radio and cinema. Blondie is now a popular motion picture series. Harold Teen, Dick Tracy, and Little Orphan Annie have also been filmed. The Lone Ranger, The Green Hornet, Dick Tracy and numerous others are radio serials, too.

But what is of greater significance is the fact that the technique of the funny books may be utilized effectively in the teaching of subject matter and in the development of democratic ideals, honest and fair-minded attitudes, and worthy character and personality traits. The educational possibilities, therefore, are multifarious.

The characters now depicted in funny books are, for the most part, vested with bizarre, grotesque, and even supernatural capacities. As one pupil told me, "The characters are all right but some of them are unbelievably powerful, for instance, Superman. I think he's a lot of boloney. If we had all the strong men who are in funny books, America wouldn't have anything to worry about."

Superman is described by his sponsors as America's national hero, who "steps to the fore in his role of protector of all Americans. With startling new inventions and lion-hearted daring he wars against those whose warped brains and mad actions have

declared them the enemies of democracy and Americanism."

U.S.A. is another awe-inspiring personage. Garbed in a blue robe, draped with a veil patterned after the American flag, she is the pictorial embodiment of the eagle pouncing upon the vulturous enemies of America.

If we accept the veracity of the ancient adage that truth is stranger than fiction, modern educators, textbook authors, and anthologists would do well to adapt the comic-strip methodology to instruct ardent funny book devotees in the adventures of such figures as General Pulaski, Admiral Perry, Galileo, Copernicus, Pasteur, Bela Schick, and a score of other international heroes.

Furthermore, a wealth of incident can be borrowed from literature and used pictorially to vivify masterpieces of renown. Cervantes' *Don Quijote*, Irving's *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, *Beowulf*, Twain's *Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn*, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Homer's *Iliad and Odyssey*, Scott's *Ivanhoe*, and even Shakespeare's 33 comedies, tragedies, and histories are replete with colorful, dynamic, dramatic episodes which could very readily replace the less desirable tales now current in funny books. In other subjects, as well, a similar technique could be used to supplement in-

struction in science, mathematics, ethics, current events, and foreign languages.

Funny books can also foster vocabulary development. One seventh-grade boy argued that reading funny books had helped him learn new words. He proceeded proudly and with great self-satisfaction to list the following words he had accumulated: hirelings, coveting, erupting, plummets, reconnoiter, sabotage, molecule, atom, dissipate, autosuggestion, surrealism, and astern.

Funny books are already waging their own private wars against intolerance, totalitarianism, and saboteurs. The tales they tell, however, are fantastic, whimsical, and preternatural. Eliminate the superhuman, exaggerated tale, substitute Hoover's G-men for the Bat-Man or Zorro, and the true comics will have an even wider appeal.

To the many teachers who have looked upon the influx of comic books with growing dismay may I say, in conclusion: let us not ban funny books; let us not penalize or ridicule pupils who read them. But let us use them to enhance instruction, to vitalize reading for the poor reader, to extend vocabularies, to foster interest in current events, and to expatiate upon American heroism in science and industry. Let us campaign for bigger and better funny books, even though they may offend our own private senses of humor and logic.



### Community Home Economics

The recent movement toward community-centered schools has been especially welcomed by the teacher of home economics; for even in the years when the school was an entity in itself, home-economics teachers went beyond the four walls of the classroom in their work and were thus among the pioneers in the present trend of making the school a vital part of the community. They observed the need of an intelligent understanding of the problems of home and family life around the school, and even the short-sighted could hardly fail to see in many homes the unscientific preparation of food, the unattractive and meager furnishings, and the unhygienic care of children and the sick. . . .

Unfortunately some of the most needy communities in the United States have a very meager home-economics program, either in the schools or elsewhere. The extension of training in more adequate family living to these needy areas is one of the most urgent problems of educational leadership. National dangers increase the need for more home-economics workers in understaffed and underprivileged communities. The meeting of this need would aid greatly in the defense of democracy by conserving and improving one of our most important national resources, the quality of our family and community life.—NELLIE BUCKEY and H. C. BREARLEY in *Peabody Journal of Education*.



# OUR BOYS RUN *the* SHOP CLASSES

*Boynton Junior  
High's Plan*

By WILLIAM J. BECKER

**A**N IMPORTANT PHASE of our school shop's work, one in which every boy participates, is the managerial plan. While this is intended primarily to give each boy a part in the cleanup program of the shop, it serves other important functions. It relieves the instructor of much routine checking by giving this task to capable boys who desire the work. In addition, several boys in each class perform periodic duties while the class is in action. Paint clerks and supply clerks issue their respective items wherever shop procedure or job construction calls for their use.

Everybody in the shop has a part in the cleanup program, from the superintendent in charge of the shop to boys brushing off machines or benches. All jobs are posted on a large "duty roster board", and each boy in each class can tell just what his responsibility is.

How are these jobs determined? Who gets the more important jobs of superintendent, foreman, assistant foreman, etc.? Three different systems can be used: election by pupils, the promotional, and the rotational. In the election system the class members appoint their own officers; in the

promotional, the boys are promoted in line with their inclination and abilities for certain jobs; in the rotational, everybody changes jobs once a week or at some other given period. However, in our experience the promotional scheme seems to work the best. Boys qualified for the managerial jobs seem to strive for them.

When each class enters, the managerial and cleanup plan is defined and all jobs explained. Then the qualifications for the higher jobs are discussed: (1) desire for the job, and (2) most ability for that particular job. Each boy may then express his desire for the cleanup job he prefers. If he is interested in any of the managerial jobs, he expresses that too, but for a few days those are not filled, to give the instructor the chance to observe the applicants. When talent begins to express itself, these appointments are made temporarily. After a period of time, if a boy feels unqualified for the job or another boy seems better for that particular job, the change is made. Some of the jobs in this managerial-cleanup plan are superintendent, foreman, assistant foreman, librarian, clerk, toolman, paint clerk, and supply clerk.

Every attempt is made to impress each class with the importance of turning a clean, well arranged shop over to the next class. The class superintendent is responsible for this. He dismisses the class only when each of his subordinate officers reports that his phase of the work is "O.K." For example, the foreman checks with each tool cabinet clerk to see that all tools are in, and reports that to the superintendent. The assistant foreman checks all benches and ma-

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Shop instructor and pupils divide responsibilities and managerial duties in the Boynton Junior High School, Ithaca, N.Y. Pupils serve as superintendents, shop foremen, paint clerks and supply clerks, and cleanup men. In this article Mr. Becker, who teaches in the school, explains the plan of organization and its values.*

chines to see that they are rearranged and clean. He then reports to the foreman. The librarian reports the condition of the instruction sheets, books, and the planning center to the superintendent. The clerk checks the absentees and appoints reserves to take their posts. While this may seem complicated, it all takes place within the cleanup period of 5 minutes. When the dismissal bell rings, the superintendent (not the instructor) dismisses the class, provided everything has been reported "O.K."

Our type of roll call throws the responsibility for reporting on each member of the class. It is a simple factor, but the boys express appreciation for the extra shop working time it gives them. On reporting to the shop, each boy checks off his name on a mimeographed roll sheet. He doesn't have to wait until the entire class reports, but starts to work as soon as he reports. Later the clerk checks to see that all have reported. He also approves, with the instructor's name stamp, the readmittance slips for those absent the previous day.

The clerk also plays an important part in other shop work. In each class we prepare a list of basic demonstrations and related work talks, and after the instructor presents one of these, the clerk checks it off the chart. Thus he can inform the instructor of the progress of that class.

It might be interesting to trace the work progress of shop classes. Two grade levels of boys work in our shop, the eighth and ninth. A choice of jobs is offered to boys in each grade, the choice becoming more liberal as the pupil becomes more experienced. Within each of the five types of work presented in the eighth grade (sheet metal, art metal, wrought iron, auto mechanics, and foundry) a number of jobs have been allotted in job sheet form. A boy may select his first job out of 8 to 12 projects. Jobs allow for individual latitude in the way of design, and each involves two phases of work, the manipulative or "doing", and the related, or "knowing". After finishing the manipu-

lative work, each boy prepares his related work unit. From the planning center (shop library) of the shop he looks up answers related to his project—related science, related mathematics, guidance or occupational information, related economics, historical development, geography of transportation, safety information, etc.

In the ninth grade no set group of project sheets is offered. Since the pupil has acquired his basic skills, he may select, within reason, the building of any job he desires. Of course, he should confine his selection to the type of work he is on at the present time. For example, it would be physically impossible to permit all to work on machine shop at the same time—the shop's capacity would not permit this. But each boy does get his turn at each kind of work. He selects his job, prepares the best plan of which he is capable, and lists the materials and their cost.

After the construction of all jobs in all grades, each pupil marks his job on the bill of material he has prepared. In addition, in the ninth grade each boy criticises his work after completion, in a space on his plan sheet. After each job is marked it is presented to the instructor for his checking of the boy's mark. It is a fact that very few marks are changed; about 80% remain unchanged, so good is the average boy's idea of his work. Of those that are changed more are raised than lowered.

Since this is an industrial age, it would seem that some school subject or study should relate somewhat to industry, should unfold the range of industry and permit a general appreciation of industry on the part of pupils who will soon be entering the work-a-day world. It would also seem, in these times of preparation for national defense, that the school subject of shop, especially metal shop, would seem important to the average boy. The facts tend to bear out these assumptions:

(1) The number of boys electing metal shop as an advanced subject has increased

far beyond the total for years past, despite the fact that total school enrolment has decreased slightly. Further, school guidance counselors have made no special attempts to interest pupils in shop. Something in the way of appreciation of conditions must have influenced this selection on the part of the boys themselves. (2) Although for years we have practised conservation in the use of shop materials, this year appreciation of national and world conditions has made almost every boy more conscious of this important point. One example illustrates this point. Since the shortage of aluminum became general knowledge, more boys have brought in pieces of scrap aluminum than ever have before. We made no special effort to collect it, only announcing that "We must be careful in the using of our shop aluminum since we are not sure when we will get more."

Outside work of a shop nature is particularly encouraged. What is it? We feel that any worthy manipulative work, especially that requiring planning, construction, and rating, is worthy. The home workshop movement of today, involving all sorts of construction and hobbies, is a good example of this. Although much commercial material is available to assist the boys, such as craft magazines, construction kits, tool kits, etc., many boys have been given their start through school shop encouragement and aid. Such aid includes loan of plans, over-

night lending of tools from a shop tool library (our clerk checks these out), construction of certain parts in the shop, extra time allowed for this work in the school shop, instructor's help in operations a bit too difficult for the boy, etc.

All boys in the eighth grade participate in shopwork. In shop, as in other subject classes of the school, our pupils are grouped homogeneously. It is interesting to note the special interests and contributions of the various graded groups. Boys from the groups representing higher intelligence seem to contribute much in the way of original design and construction. They want to experiment with new ideas and types of construction. On the other hand, boys of the below-grade or atypical groups seem most interested in shop maintenance projects. Almost without exception, a word dropped that such and such is needed for the school, or that this shop item needs repair, brings several who insist upon doing the work.

If a democracy is to be workable all individuals in it must contribute their share to the well being of the group. A school shop is an ideal situation for such a functioning democracy because the room, type of work, equipment, and organization lend themselves to a democratic setup. All boys can contribute to the improvement of the shop, subsequently adding to the welfare of those to follow.



### *Supervision: Encouragement*

Of specific things that supervisors can do, the most important come under the head of encouragement. A supervisor needs to learn how to give praise, honest praise for real merit—not flattery or praise for things that are obviously not outstanding. It is one of the tasks of the supervisor in his work as a counselor to study the teacher and find out the strengths that she possesses and help her to recognize these and build upon them. To use praise merely as a prelude for the criticism to follow is to use it as a tool to achieve the purposes of the supervisor rather than to build up confidence in

the teacher so that she can achieve her instructional purposes. . . .

On the other hand, the supervisor who is performing her task as a counselor can afford to overlook defects. In the first place, defects are seldom eradicated by pointing them out to another person, or if they are eradicated, other defects may come to take their place that are even worse than the original ones. So a supervisor can afford to concentrate on the good points that a teacher possesses and on the good results that she is able to produce.—

PERCIVAL M. SYMONDS in *Teachers College Record*.

# The Case (*with reservations*) for the “Professional” Assembly

By  
ERNEST E. OERTEL

ELLEN BOOTHROYD BROGUE presented a good case against the paid assembly in the February 1941 number of *THE CLEARING HOUSE*. We agree with practically all her arguments against the paid assembly in cases where such assemblies are charged directly to the pupils.

We agree that the dimes of indigent children should not be used to finance extra-curricular activities. We acknowledge that there are many inferior assemblies of this type and that often too much time is taken out of the regular school day for them.

Mrs. Brogue's statement, however, should not be interpreted to be an indictment against all professionally-conducted assemblies. Mrs. Brogue does not intend it to be such. She indicates clearly in the article that a variety of assembly programs, including some put on by professionals, is desirable.

For a period of fifteen years I have been

more or less responsible for the direction of assembly programs in different school systems. I have always stressed the value of the pupil-conducted assembly, insisting that wherever possible the whole assembly schedule be organized around the creative programs of pupils. Classes, school clubs, and special pupil groups have been regularly assigned specific assembly responsibilities so that pupil participation might be assured.

The point I wish to make in this article is that in a well-rounded assembly program during any school year there is a justified place for a number of professionally-conducted assemblies. I have usually used from six to eight annually.

I believe that where a varied assembly program is properly organized and conducted, one assembly each week is not too much. Ordinarily, assemblies should not be longer than one period in length—from forty-five minutes to one hour. I need not review in detail here the variety of subjects incorporated into assembly hours in the average public school. A right proportion of announcements, discussions, demonstrations, plays, skits, motion picture films, musical programs, and time for working out pupil problems, together with provisions for professionally-conducted assemblies, should be provided for in any well-considered schedule of assemblies.

Pupils need the variety of experiences that come to them from participation in assembly programs. They need the opportunity to work together in unison as a democratic group. They need the experience that the assembly provides for social cooperation. They should have, moreover,

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EDITOR'S NOTE: In "*The Case Against the Paid Assembly*" (*THE CLEARING HOUSE*, February 1941) Ellen Boothroyd Brogue pointed out that too many professionally-conducted assemblies, for which admission is charged, robbed pupils of opportunities to develop their own talents, and worked a hardship on pupils from poorer homes. Mr. Oertel agrees with Mrs. Brogue. But he believes that about six professionally conducted assemblies a year are desirable. And in this article he explains the plan by which his school system finances such assemblies without charging admission. The author is district superintendent of schools, Placer Union High School and Junior College, Auburn, Calif.



the opportunities the assembly affords them for performance by and for themselves and for seeing and hearing their fellows perform. The assembly provides occasions for an inter-change of ideas and the development of numerous invaluable appreciations and skills, oral expression in particular. Pupils understand each other better through the assembly; they understand the school better; they have a wider participation in school life.

If a reasonable amount of serious thought is given to assembly programs by those responsible for planning and conducting them, there can be little question as to the value of the assembly in modern school life, including the occasional assembly put on by professionals.

Certain it is that it is not desirable to require pupils to pay directly for the privilege of attending the school assembly. During the fifteen years I have been directing assembly programs we have not required pupils to pay admission fees for a single assembly. Although I have worked in different school systems in widely-scattered parts of the United States, I have had no difficulty in making arrangements which have obviated the need for pay assemblies. Yet we have always had our quota of good, professionally-conducted programs.

How has this been done? It is not as difficult to do as one might be inclined to believe. In the schools in which I have worked, we invariably have had an arrangement with the board of education to match funds with the associated pupils to pay for professionally-conducted assemblies. If we decide to have six programs during the year at a total cost of \$250, the board of education agrees to pay \$125 and the pupil treasury provides the balance.

I have found that board members and pupils are willing to vote money for this purpose when they understand that there will be no additional charges for assemblies; when they are assured of having outstanding professionally-conducted assem-

blies; and when they know that the other party to the contract is to go half way in paying for the service.

Professionally-conducted assemblies offered on such a basis must, of course, be good. They must be so good that pupils will be enthusiastic about them; so good that reports will come back to board of education members that these assembly programs are unquestionably purposeful and worthwhile.

Because of sad experiences I have had in picking up free-lancers who roam the country with briefcases full of testimonials concerning their ability as lecturers or performers, I rarely accept any assembly trouper whose ability I do not know to be outstanding, either on a basis of personal observation of his work somewhere else, or on the basis of testimony that is direct and absolutely trustworthy. I have preferred to work through certain assembly bureaus which send out only tested performers. Some of these bureaus have committees of school men who pass on the ability of prospective assembly performers before they are certified by the bureau and listed as available for use in their circuits.

I do not mean to imply that good programs cannot be booked outside of commercial bureaus or agencies. My point is that performers for assemblies must be selected, not on a basis of chance, but on a basis of proved merit.

By booking assembly speakers and artists well in advance—in some cases as much as a year in advance—one is able to get outstanding performers for assembly programs. For several years I was superintendent of schools in a location close to New York City. It was gratifying to be able to secure for our moderate number of professionally conducted assemblies some outstanding artists from this metropolitan center, who came to our schools to perform for incredibly small fees, considering their reputations.

On numerous occasions we have had great satisfaction in seeing such artists en-

thusiastically received. It was thrilling to note how much good pupils derived from their programs, in inspiration, in motivation, and in the way of developing new appreciation.

In parts of the country remote from the large cities it is more difficult to secure first-rate artist performers for assembly programs, but if enough schools could get together and arrange for a half-dozen really good professionally-conducted assemblies for each school per year, many more performers with outstanding reputations could be induced to travel through the countryside to perform before eager and receptive public school audiences. Artists like to work before young people if some reasonable business arrangement can be made for their services. They usually have a fine message to deliver or a splendid art to illustrate or demonstrate.

An assembly bureau providing performers for our assemblies here in Southern California is making high-class speakers, musicians, and entertainers available to us at very modest sums, considering the fact that travel expenses reach unusually large proportions in this part of the state. In some parts of the west assembly performers seem almost to work at below-cost figures. The reason is that assembly bureaus book them so that they can cover two and sometimes three schools in a single day. It is a hard life for the performers, but a good many of them give this service gladly, chiefly because they like school audiences.

I am as much opposed to the paid assembly conducted along traditional lines as is Mrs. Brogue, and I am glad to have her present her strong case against the paid assembly, but I should like to make every effort to safeguard the institution of the professionally-conducted assembly. I think

our pupils need the inspiration, enthusiasm, and sheer pleasure which can be derived from assemblies conducted by professionals who really know how to inspire, instruct, and entertain children. Such persons are available in all parts of the country.

May I say here, parenthetically, that it takes a special type of speaker and entertainer to "go over" with pupil audiences. A person or troupe having a reputation with adults may not "click" at all with a school audience. There is a difference usually understood by trained school people.

A professionally-conducted assembly provides something for modern school life which cannot be supplied through any other means. The artist performer in an assembly program is like the artist teacher in the classroom. The teacher inspires and motivates. The professional artist can set standards, suggest goals, and inspire effort and perseverance. He is needed to provide a proper balance in the complete assembly program for the year, which should include, along with the finished performance of the master, the most feeble attempts of the timid fledgling.

Let us discourage as effectively as possible the assembly that lures dimes from poor children to enrich the treasuries of extra-curricular clubs, or even needy pupil associations. Let us delete mediocre and purposeless assembly programs which steal and waste valuable class time. But let us safeguard professionally conducted assemblies which are in the hands of artists who have vital messages and living arts to transmit. We ought to encourage more and more talented performers to make use of school assemblies the nation over as media for their valuable—and indispensable—contributions.



### Personal Note

Next time I go to summer school, I'll take some subject I've never studied before, anywhere, ever—

like ornithology.—LUCRETIA MONEY in *The Mississippi Educational Advance*.

# NO BOOK FINES

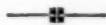
By  
MAUD MINSTER in Altoona High School Library

SOME REASONS GIVEN for book fines are: to get books returned on time, to teach unselfish use of public property, to develop an attitude of responsibility, and to bring about prompt reporting of lost books.

Then we note that there are numerous methods used to cancel book fines—"Forgiveness Week", "Conscience Day", "Barrel Day", and "Fine Cancellation Week". The borrower is asked, in these novel ways, to return all over-due books and no questions will be asked and no fines imposed. The fact that these special "in-gatherings" exist indicates the fines "system" is not producing desired results.

The use of fines in school libraries in an attempt to have books returned promptly will not produce the maximum harmony nor contribute to the efficiency of the library in general. A fine is considered a punishment, and punishments inspire an antagonistic rather than a cooperative attitude. Some one must make the group loyal to the purpose, must guide and develop individuals so that they may better share in realizing group ends.

Pupils who do not have their work completed by an assigned date are not fined.



EDITOR'S NOTE: *The author points to indications that book fines are not producing the intended results. She believes that such a system tends to set up a barrier between the library and the very pupils it hopes to entice. In this article she explains the plan used by the Altoona, Pa., Senior High School library in place of book fines. Miss Minster is librarian of the school, and is instructor in the Temple University Summer School of Library Science.*

Those who fail to return athletic equipment, pageant costumes, textbooks, supplementary books, are not fined. Why, then, should there be a fine for library materials?

A pupil unable to pay his fines may be asked to "work them out" in the library. Hence, to him the library becomes a place of punishment, rather than a place which makes possible the most liberal education. The plan which contributes most to the service of the library is to have the pupil go home and get the book.

Recently a public library reported 50 per cent of its borrowers "blocked" for non-payment of fines, which seems to be defeating the aim of the free library.

One substitute used for fines is the "over-due" notice which carries a flat charge—usually 10 cents. This charge is made as a fee for the notice, postage, and the time required in sending it, and is not interpreted as a punishment.

The Altoona Senior High School has never used the system of collecting fines for over-due books. In the forming of this policy, the following points were considered.

With limited help, is the librarian justified in using her time to keep records of fines and collect pennies, or could she invest her time more profitably in guiding pupils, selecting materials, and teaching the use of books and libraries?

Will pupils be tempted to lie and say they do not have books rather than pay a fine? Do fines take away the democratic idea as to the use of public property? Do they show weakness on the part of the staff? Will they make the library unpopular in contrast to all the other departments in the school which do not charge for over-due materials?

Will pupils be tempted to sign fictitious names when taking books out, so that in case of failure to return them on time they will be free from fines? Can public-school libraries strictly enforce book-fine rules?

During the orientation lesson in the library pupils are informed that there are no fines, but that when over-due notices are received books should be returned at once. A notice is first sent to the homeroom, and if there is no response, a postal card is sent to the home. The mother usually helps in getting the books returned. If there is no response to the card the pupil is sent home for the book, and since pupils do not like a trip home there are few who do not respond to notices.

If an over-night loan is not returned the pupil is sent home at once. A new pupil, asked to return an over-night book, said he had forgotten to bring it and would return it the following day. When he was told he must go home for it he said it was in his

locker—he had wanted to use it another night.

A pupil transferred from a high school in another city, when asked to return an over-due book, said she could not return it until after pay-day, because her mother had no money. Told there was no charge, she explained, "I would have brought it back yesterday had I known that, but we always paid for over-due books where I went to school."

In another case a mother told her daughter, who was entering high school, that she must not bring books home from the library, because the mother had no money for book fines.

Our plan has worked very satisfactorily. We will always have the chronic offenders, plus the few who forget occasionally. But penalties don't change them.

The problem of book fines in public schools and public libraries certainly merits consideration.



## \* \* GUEST EDITORIAL \* \*

*"If Truth Be Treason . . ." Condensed from New Jersey Educational Review*

The textbook situation held the public eye during the past month.

The textbook critics had decidedly the worst of the argument. The American Legion has disowned Treason-in-the-Textbooks Armstrong. The National Association of Manufacturers finally walked out on the report prepared for them by Professor Robey.

It is increasingly apparent, however, that the campaign is primarily an effort to discredit the schools to promote reductions in school support. It is also apparent that the attacks were carefully timed for a period of national stress and patriotic fervor, and that they are likely to continue in the future.

The schools must, in the main, meet their critics and defeat them. They cannot yield their right to present honestly and fairly controversial issues which their pupils meet hourly in the newspapers, on the radio, and around the supper table. To the

extent that they do yield, the schools lay their own groundwork for a poorly-supported educational system devoted to drills in the basic number combinations.

On the other hand, mere rhetoric, clamor for "academic freedom", and denial that there is anything wrong serve no end. The public must understand that the books are selected by boards of education on the basis of careful, considered recommendations by those who must use them. Recently Newark has had an excellent series of news stories making this point. . . .

All the forces of light should be ready to fight on every front. For those forces we would like to propose a battlecry, fashioned by Donald Ogden Stewart upon a famous model. Urging that the movies reflect America as it is, rather than as a Propaganda-Ministry would have it, he said, "If truth be treason, make the most of it."

Under that banner, the schools too can stand.



# SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

Edited by THE STAFF

**YOUTH AID:** An end to the NYA and the CCC as soon as they have completed their present emergency assignment of training workers for the defense program is recommended by the Educational Policies Commission of the NEA and the AASA. The Commission has just published an 80-page pamphlet on the matter. Points made: That Federal funds for youth aid should be distributed to schools through the U. S. Office of Education rather than through the NYA. That after discontinuance of the NYA and the CCC, their educational functions should be carried on by state and local school systems, and their functions as public works agencies should be turned over to the general agencies of public works. Purpose of these recommendations is to end the growing competition of the two government-controlled groups with the established school systems as educational agencies. The Commission evidently feels that what this country needs is just one set of school systems.

**HALLOWEEN:** Why didn't somebody think of this before? As a scheme to "insure" the town against Halloween damage, Glen Echo, Md., authorities elected a 17-year-old high-school boy to serve as mayor and be responsible for the town's affairs during the Halloween period, reports the newspaper *PM*. The "mayor" has a staff of high-school pupils. All have promised to prevent any damage this year. Probably this will do more good than any action by the cops—and isn't it a "Practical Experience in Democracy"? It's too late now—but you might file this item for attention next fall.

**TRIVIA:** The Panama Canal Zone has three public schools with rather odd names: Red Tank, Chiva Chiva, and Frijoles. Frijoles is the Spanish word for beans. . . . There are about 28,000 Parent-Teacher Association groups in the United States, with a membership of some 2,500,000. . . . A man whose business letterhead states him to be "Notary Public and Lyric Writer" occasionally submits some poems to *THE CLEARING HOUSE*.

**RIGHTS:** To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Bill of Rights, the Council Against Intolerance in America is sponsoring a nationwide observance on December 15. A free Bill of Rights packet may be obtained by writing to the Council at Room 905, Lincoln Building, New York City. Packet includes a copy of the Bill of Rights, suitable for framing; suggestions for schoolwide and classroom participa-

tion; and a play entitled "All-Out for the Bill of Rights".

**SUPPLIES:** Supplies and equipment needed for instruction in schools and colleges do not come under any priority order yet released, reports the U. S. Office of Education. But negotiations are far advanced for obtaining a special blanket priority arrangement under which ordinary school supplies may be purchased at a relatively low Preference Rating.

**TESTS:** Long a bone of contention—and claimed by attackers to be a fossil bone at that—the Regents' examinations of New York State are to be de-emphasized, reports Benjamin Fine in the *New York Times*. They will be supplemented by "progress tests" that do not cramp a school's course of study to the narrow purpose of teaching to meet the college-minded requirements of the Regents' tests. But the projected tests are being developed one by one, and it may take 5 to 10 years to complete the program.

**ALIBI:** Speaking of Regents' examinations, you'll like the story of the small-town high-school principal who had failed the daughter of a prominent citizen. Ready for the principal's scalp, the irate parent stormed into the school, demanding that his child be promoted. Whereupon the principal thumbed through his files and brought out the results of the Regents' tests, explaining: "You see, I am powerless. She was failed by the State Education Department, not by me." That apparently satisfied the indignant father, and the principal retained his post another year.

**TRADES:** The boom in defense industries is inspiring a rush of high-school pupils to enrol in trades courses—and in many cities the facilities just aren't there to cope with the applicants. In New York City, enrolment in vocational courses has increased 15% in a year. There are 62,623 boys and girls taking trades courses, reports Benjamin Fine in the *New York Times*. About 5,000 more have been turned away, and principals have discouraged many thousands of others from applying, because of limited facilities. It is estimated that 100,000 would be enrolled if they could be accepted. Here at last is the hoped-for trend away from the overcrowded "white collar" field—even if it's temporary.

(Continued on page 192)

## ➤ EDITORIAL ➤

# Perfectionism is Spinach

**D**URING THE LAST YEAR one has heard more and more often the term "perfectionist". It is a left-handed word. That is, it is always used as an indication of scorn or reproach. "Oh, he is a perfectionist!" is said with a lowering of the voice and a raising of the eyebrows, as one would say, "Oh, he is a wife-beater!"

The term may be an old one, but its popular use in educational literature and in conversations is relatively new. It may be well to examine the connotations it carries, so that if you are called a perfectionist you will be immediately aware of the derogation and will properly resent it. This examination of the term seems especially necessary because, to one not initiated, the word might appear to be complimentary.

The perfectionist, it appears, is not perfect and may be quite modest about his own performance. But he has a habit of examining educational efforts in terms of the tangible, overt product, rather than in terms of the process of growth and development.

He listens to the high-school orchestra and appraises its music, employing criteria by which one would properly criticize a concert by the National Symphony. If he is a music instructor given to perfectionism (and some music instructors probably are), he will employ professional musicians to play most of the solo parts when his high-school orchestra plays its concert. If he is the teacher of journalism, he will write the headlines for the school paper his class gets out, so that the headlines will be sure to please the Press Association. This cult of the perfect has members in every department of the school, if it is a large school; and supervisors and administrators are almost all ex-officio members.

Education is a process. Education is the learning, not what is learned. A teacher's proper concern is not merely with getting "correct" answers, or perfect recitations, or no-hit-no-run baseball games; it is the teacher's mission to provide encouragement and direction for wholesome developmental activities at any and every level. Measured by a musician's standards, a boy who has just learned to blow a clear note on his trumpet is wholly beneath notice; measured by a teacher's values, he is much more important, this boy who can now blow a good note and is eager to learn to play the whole scale well—more important than the most accomplished trumpeter that ever triple-tongued a cadenza.

"Perfectionism" is not a foreign "ism" but one as native as the dunce cap, and as antiquated. If we have just discovered it as one of the forces that hinders the extension of developmental experiences, we can rejoice as the pathologists rejoice when they isolate some morbid germ. To know what perfectionism is will be, for most of us, a first inoculation against it.

Before someone cries out, What of standards? Are we to have no standard for pupils' work? Are we to be pleased with everything, to commend bad work as well as good?—let us agree that we must have standards, that we must know good work, and how good work is done, and how to get pupils to *want* to do good work, and how to help them do good work, and still better work, when they have this desire. But for us it is the singer, not the song. The pupil in an art class, and not Art (with a capital A) is a teacher's concern.

In a factory the foreman may properly be more concerned with the quantity and quality of the work turned out than with

the social and intellectual development of the workers. But a school is not a factory, it measures its output differently, its net profit is measured in dividends of another kind.

The imperfections of perfectionism are apparent to anyone who sees education as a long-time process. Minerva sprang full-panoplied from the head of Jove, but that was long ago. In our time the life abundant and the good things it connotes are born out of the encouragement great teachers give to genius-in-the-bud, and to the lesser breed. The love of poetry or of any other good thing—beer and skittles—is not popularized by persons who love it passionately, zealously, and revel in its perfection. The love of poetry is transmitted to pupils by teachers who love their pupils more than poetry.

It is hard to explain why poetry, so diligently taught for many academic generations, is so poorly regarded and so little used by most of us who have been taught, presumably, to "appreciate" it. It is hard to explain unless it is because our teachers were too often perfectionist in their attitude, asking us to delight in Keats before we had assimilated Guest. In music and art there has been the same perfectionist emphasis on classics, classics, classics. The

museums are conventionally endowed with paintings and sculpture and other objects that are surrounded with a hush, an awesome perfectionism.

A few chosen people manage to understand the great classics, or pretend they do; but the human impulse is to retreat from the display of too much that is perfect. The ego cringes. Then the ego goes into action and carries us off to a ball game or a movie, where such perfection as there is we are familiar with, even to the point of identifying ourselves with it. What high-school boy, for instance, doubts that he could be as funny as Mickey Rooney, if he had Rooney's chance?

We Americans are a peculiar people. Except in rare instances, we choose for our heroes common persons with common virtues, not the arista, not the elite, not the super-men. We can tolerate perfection in small doses and in the forms in which we find it palatable. Teaching, as a phase of social engineering, must work within the frame of our prejudice until, as the result of much good teaching over a long time, we have achieved better things and are proportionately more willing to peer into the dazzling aura of things that are perfect.

J. C. D.



## 7 Questions on Religious Instruction

A local board of education had been called into a meeting to discuss what could be done to meet the insistent and growing demand for school time devoted to religious instruction. After some preliminary discussion the board's solicitor made this comment, "Gentlemen, you have on the table tonight the hottest potato in this community." . . .

The following questions might well be asked about this issue:

1. Is religious education really necessary for the full and complete education of the children of this community?
2. Are the children of this community receiving the religious and moral instruction they deserve?
3. Are the churches prepared to teach children?
4. What will the children miss if their school time

is shortened? This question is often overlooked.

5. What will be done with the children who don't seek religious training?

6. Are the local church people willing to subject their programs to the same careful evaluation that we expect in the public school?

7. Do the church people really want school time?

The schoolman must keep his feet on the ground and approach the problem with one primary concern in mind: *What is best for the children?* It has yet to be demonstrated that the good effects of religious instruction on released time could not be achieved through cooperative efforts of school and church that would not involve the many difficulties of a released-time program.—GEORGE E. HILL in *Pennsylvania School Journal*.

## ➤ SCHOOL LAW REVIEW ➤

# Teachers Must Eat, Boards Must Dig, States Court Flatly

By DANIEL R. HODGDON

JUST because a board of education doesn't have the money to pay teachers' salaries it is not excused from paying the salaries agreed upon. Salaries of teachers on tenure are obligations of the board which cannot be evaded. Boards of education or school boards are mere agents of the state. They were created to do the service of the state in the manner in which the state dictates.

Sometimes boards get a very inflated idea of their importance but in reality they can do nothing except as the state dictates. Courts have a way of deflating importance that frequently appears when school boards take things into their own hands.

Of course school boards have a very important function in a community that is entirely outside of their legal status. They can engender a great respect for the school system they represent and produce local pride in the schools. In this respect they act only as citizens of the community, for they have no legal demand placed upon them by the state except to provide for all essential and necessary ways of operating the schools.

In this case a board decided not to pay its teachers what was due them on the ground that before they could be compelled to pay the teachers with public funds it must be shown that money was available. The court, however, ordered these teachers paid and the board to get the money.

You can't argue with the law even when money is hard to obtain. Teachers must eat, like other biological creations. (*La Rue v. Board of Trustees of Baldwin Park School District et al (including several others)*. 104 P (2d) 689 (Cal.) Aug. 5, 1940.)

### Without Tenure

The rule of law generally accepted in interpreting statutes, "*expressio unius est exclusio alterius*" ("the expression of one thing is the exclusion of another"), is applicable to the tenure statute. Where the statute provides that permanent tenure of teachers may only be acquired in a position requiring certification qualification, a person doing educational research in a school system does not acquire the

tenure status. He must have acted in one of the capacities designated by the statute for which a certificate is required.

Thus a person acting as director, associate, or assistant director of a bureau or department of educational research, unless these departments were specifically designated in the statute, would obtain no tenure status. (*Brintle v. Board of Education of City of Long Beach et al*. 110 P (2d) 440, February 17, 1941.)

### Time to Rusticate

When a teacher is illegally dismissed he doesn't need to peddle chewing gum or run a hot dog stand to mitigate the damages for his dismissal. He is under no obligation to seek employment, for he must be paid in full for every day he has been illegally kept from his position. That's the law.

Go fishing or take a vacation in Florida or California and let the board worry! You are on a paying vacation when illegally dismissed. (*La Rue v. Board of Trustees of Baldwin Park School District et al (including several others)*. 104 P 689 (Cal.) Aug. 5, 1940.)

### Purpose of Tenure Law

The court year after year is called upon to designate the purpose of tenure. In 1940 it held that the purpose of a tenure act is to give teachers continuous service from year to year unless removed for disability, inefficiency, insubordination, or moral turpitude. "It is designed to protect competent and qualified teachers of the public schools in the security of their positions, thus accomplishing the dual object of security of the teachers in their positions and benefit of the public resulting from placing the tenure of positions on demonstrated qualifications and merit." No teacher can be removed from his position except by strict adherence to the provision of the statute. (*King v. Wells County School Superintendent, et al*. 199 Ga. 776, 10 S.E. (2nd) 832, Sept. 25, 1940.)



## BOOK REVIEWS

JOHN CARR DUFF and PHILIP W. L. COX, *Review Editors*

*Getting U S into War*, by PORTER SARGENT.  
Boston: Porter Sargent, 1941. 618 pages,  
\$4.

It is quite obvious that Sargent has no illusions regarding the reception that awaits this volume. It is not probable that those of us who might have welcomed it had it appeared when the issue of war or peace seemed still a matter that liberal men might affect will care to reread the evidence that the author marshalled for us so effectively or the warnings that he sounded so vigorously, now that events and decisions have thrown the question into the lap of the gods.

Nevertheless we cannot but be glad that he has boldly printed the sequential bulletins. It furnishes us, to use his own words, with "a contemporary record and survey of the easy steps, the 'small decisions of each day', by which in the last two years we have come along the road toward war." Very possibly these small decisions, or most of them, were inevitable; they may have been such that any honest, earnest man who feels the responsibility for making choices would have felt it necessary to make.

But whether the outcomes might have been different under the circumstances or whether the outcome of war or isolation would have been the same even had different decisions been made during the recent past, this "scrapbook", or memory book, of the road we have come over should be and will be welcomed by all who do not surrender to the impulse to avert the eyes and the mind from the facts that do not accord with the nationalistic myths.

The book consists of the one hundred bulletins sent out severally in mimeographed form to all who indicated an interest in receiving them. These bulletins have been brought up to date by means of notes, and an introductory narrative furnishes an orientation both for the subject matter and purposes of the bulletins and for the point of view of Porter Sargent. And let no one dismiss that point of view airily—at least not until he has read his two remarkably prophetic poems; *England Farewell*, 1913 and *England Revisited*, 1933, reprinted from earlier publications.

"It is difficult to hate when you thoroughly understand." Liberated men will love Porter Sargent all

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the more as they come to understand why he has "felt a concern" for presenting facts that seemed unlikely to be known or given consideration unless he made them available.

P. S. This review had been prepared in June. By September the demand for this book had necessitated a second printing, which casts doubt upon the justification for our first paragraph. Our congratulations to the author and especially to ourselves, the American people, on our freedom from frenzy.

P. W. L. C.

*Bronson Alcott, Teacher*, by DOROTHY McCUSKEY. New York: Macmillan Co., 1940. 211 pages, \$2.50.

The subject of this scholarly and interesting study has been somewhat vaguely approved as an eccentric but lovable, impractical, and visionary man, misunderstood by contemporaries, even by those who aided him. It has not been appreciated, however, that his positive orientation accepted such failure to comprehend his beliefs and practices as inevitable and that he prepared for the approbation of future generations by keeping daily journals recording his actions and thoughts. These journals have only now been given general circulation, first by Odell Shepard in *Pedlar's Progress*, and now by Miss McCuskey in the volume here reviewed.

The study is presented in eight chapters based upon, and generously quoting from, his journals. Starting with "Years of Preparation" we see him teaching at Cheshire, Connecticut, and later in his Temple School in Boston. We find him misjudged, even charged with indecency and heresy, because he questioned the textbook of his class. But he still sought to serve a humanity that wanted no service from him.

He took seriously and with naïveté the faith that we all say that we feel in the magnetic power of sincerity to win confidence in a cause or a program, that we hold to be the primary quality of character as a moving cause of events and things rather than either as a result of them or as their mere concomitant. He was so sincere a transcendentalist that he neither would nor could compromise with the stereotypes, the myths, the usage and wont, of his day and age.

To put into practice the principle of activity, of intrinsic motivation, of practice in forming judgments, of self-imposed discipline is not yet altogether safe even in frankly progressive schools. For the resulting judgments, behaviors, and self-reliance are not pleasing to men who "know" what the "right" answers and behaviors are. But Bronson Alcott could not do otherwise. We do well to know him today.

The author puts us deeply in debt to her, not only because she leads us to appreciate Alcott, but even more because she helps us to judge sympathetically those occasional honest, intelligent, impractical colleagues who are faithful to the best that they know, who refuse to compromise with ignorance and intolerance, who face disaster without flinching rather than flatter those whose influences they need but whose judgments they do not respect.

P. W. L. C.

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*The Education of Exceptional Children* (McGraw-Hill Series in Education), by ARCH O. HECK. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1940. 536 pages, \$3.75.

This is an orthodox textbook on the education of exceptional children. It is comprehensive, dealing with the educational problems of all types of the atypical. The section on the education of the physically handicapped, for example, has chapters concerned not only with the crippled, the partially seeing and the blind, the hard of hearing and the deaf, but with children with lowered vitality, defective speech, cardiac insufficiency, and the like. There is, as well, a thorough discussion of the educational problems of backward and defective children and of superior and gifted children. Additional sections deal with the education of the socially handicapped child (with unusually comprehensive presentation of the programs of special schools) and with the problems of administering programs for the education of the exceptional.

The volume is intended frankly as a text for courses in this field in teachers' colleges and schools of education. It will appeal to instructors who like a text that is compactly written, packed with information and topically organized. The student who has mastered this text should have little difficulty with certification examinations in this field.

On the other hand, instructors who prefer that the student's reading material should stimulate his imagination to original thinking and should serve as a point of departure for thinking and discussion rather than a body of material to be mastered, will find this book disappointing. Despite the fact that the author begins the book with a chapter entitled "The Field and Its Challenge", and that scattered throughout the text are additional chapters presenting a challenge of one type or another, it is the reviewer's feeling that the book will present little challenge to students.

There is little material on the mental hygiene, guidance and vocational preparation of exceptional children. The material on prevention is sketchy. The bibliographies draw largely upon previously published books in this field rather than upon the more recent periodical literature. Despite these deficiencies, however, the book gives perhaps as well rounded a picture of the education of exceptional children for the introductory student as any text now available.

HARVEY ZORBAUGH

*The Meaning of Democracy*, by W. P. RUSSELL and T. H. BRIGGS. New York: Macmillan Co., 1941. 413 pages, \$1.48.

This text is prepared for high-school pupils. Its purpose is to encourage the study of democracy and

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its meaning, and to help those who would live it. The brief, clearly written chapters which compose Part I are sometimes inspiring, sometimes intemperate and unjust. They seem to the reviewer to be too strictly intellectual and emotional, too little challenging to specific behaviors and acts. They are didactic in the extreme. Like science, democracy must be lived and created by each one as well as "studied", if it is to be realistically understood.

Part II, "The Creed of Democracy", by Briggs, is of outstanding value as a positive, clear-cut, and cunning statement of the platform to which the enlightened American may be assumed to subscribe. Each of the fifty-nine statements of the creed is followed by questions for reflection and class discussion. It is unfortunate that so vital a topic should have to be so enmeshed in verbalistic treatment—168 pages of it. However good each statement and each question—and they are good—the total is overwhelming.

Part III consists of special readings ranging from John Locke to Abraham Lincoln.

As an antidote for indiscriminating "extracurricular" activities such academic treatment may be indicated. The reviewer wishes that the authors had prepared more integrated and coordinated materials that would promote behaviors in the light of reason.

P. W. L. C.

*Higher Education and the Negro*, by MALCOLM S. MACLEAN. New York. American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom. 13 pages, 10 cents.

President MacLean of Hampton Institute presents in this pamphlet the salient facts on the economic and educational opportunities and status of Negro and white youths in the Southeastern states. It is neither surprising nor damning to find how greatly disadvantaged Negro youths are as compared with white youths.

It is disappointing and challenging, however, to discover how inadequate are present efforts to overcome these handicaps. Nevertheless, there has been progress and the author is on the whole optimistic about the readiness and ability of the American people, particularly the Negro educators themselves, to press toward the day when equality of opportunity for youth shall be achieved. P. W. L. C.

*The New Prometheus*, by LYMAN BRYSON. New York: Macmillan Co., 1941. 107 pages, \$1.

The Kappa Delta Pi Lecture Series contains a considerable number of significant volumes. The thirteenth seems to the reviewer to be not above the average. That judgment is not made to disparage

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the book or its author. The sentiments and opinions are effectively stated. Most if not all liberals will nod assent to them.

It is just a bit unfortunate that Bertrand Russell, H. G. Wells, Winston Churchill (the American author), John Dewey, and a hundred others have all cultivated this ground so assiduously and patiently, that Bryson's restatements lose their potency.

The chapters are entitled: (1) Scientific Method and the Citizen, (2) The Nature of Scientific Method, (3) The Teaching of Scientific Method, (4) The Place of Scientific Method in Our Time, and (5) Science for Men, not Masters.

In this final chapter Bryson does effectively wield the phrases by which the scientific way of life may be asserted, e.g., "Because emotions and prejudice have often been twins, we still think that emotion cannot be served by intelligence—education has failed to tie men's loyalties to the only kind of freedom that is worth having, the freedom to use the mind in all its untrammelled strength and to abide by clearly seen conclusions."

P. W. L. C.

*The Consumer Movement: What It Is and What It Means*, by HELEN SORENSON. New York: Harper & Bros., 1941. 235 pages, \$2.50.

In America the consumer was late in becoming

vocal. It was not until 1899 that the Consumers League was formed, reflecting the spirit of assertion and the recognition of social responsibility that was suffusing considerable segments of emancipated men and women. During the sympathetic atmosphere of the first decade and a half of the Twentieth Century, the liberal forces rallied behind Florence Kelly, Theodore Roosevelt, Harvey Wiley, Upton Sinclair, and others to challenge the principle of *caveat emptor*, both through legislatures and courts and through enlightenment of actual or potential consumers on the dangers resulting from ignorance or carelessness.

The early junior high schools, by general-science, community-civics, and current-events courses supported these groups. Commissions to investigate the high cost of living and clubs to enforce boycotts of highly priced articles sprang up all over the country.

The first World War and the "Golden Twenties" seriously undermined such efforts. But during the third and fourth decades there have grown up newer organizations to aid the consumer to assert himself. It is to these more recent developments that the author gives chief emphasis in the volume under review.

She explains the growth of awareness of consumer needs on the part of scientists and educators, of the organizations of consumers, of the growth of consumer cooperatives, of the gradual

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taming of distributors and producers of goods. In the final chapter the author seeks to evaluate the temporary agitation and organization of or for consumers in terms of a reasonable pattern.

An appendix lists the organizations of or for consumers in this country. P. W. L. C.

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and gives a diagnostic story of each person and class taking the test. E. R. G.

*The Nineteen-Forty Mental Measurements Yearbook*, edited by OSCAR K. BUROS. Highland Park, N.J., 1941, \$6.

This most excellent contribution to the field of measurement is the result of the cooperative work of 250 psychologists, test technicians, subject-matter specialists, and teachers. The work was coordinated by Editor Buros. Its 674 pages are complete with descriptions of all tests issued up to 1940. Information about tests was obtained through up-to-date bibliographies of recent books published in all English-speaking countries, through reviews appearing in a wide range of journals published in this country and abroad, and, most important, through the complete analyses of the tests made by the cooperating group.

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*Courage Over the Andes*, by FREDERIC ARNOLD KUMMER. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1940. 251 pages, \$2.

Here is a book that has a claim to a place in your junior-high-school library. It has some of the quality of Henty's derring-do stories of heroes against a reasonably accurate historical background. Kummer has written 37 books and nine plays, so he is not a novice; but the merits of this story must derive in part from the fact that he is the father of several lively children, and in writing a book that would please his own boys he has written one that is likely to interest boys (and girls) everywhere, especially if they are partial to books with the romantic flavor than can be distilled out of historical events and far-away places.

If the style is not distinguished, it is readable, and the illustrations and decorations by Armstrong Sperry contribute to the excitement, though the artist is not so successful in some of his illustration as he is in the spirited end-papers and the other pictures where he indicates his partiality for square-riggers. The story recounts the adventures of an American boy in Chile during the struggle for Chilean independence, and it is of somewhat greater interest because of our present need to know whatever we can learn about the history and background of the South American nations. J. C. D.

*Choose and Use Your College*, by GUY E. SNAVELY. New York: Harper & Bros. 1941. 166 pages, \$2.

This volume is offered "for young people and for parents who are planning the education of their children". It is a trade book rather than a professional book. The author is executive director of the Association of American Colleges.

The ten chapters are titled (1) Why College? (2) Which College? (3) How College? (4) What to Study, (5) How to Study, (6) Careers, (7) Friendships, (8) Health, (9) College Life, (10) Life Outlook. The appendix includes a "list of approved colleges" and a "list of college loan funds".

The reviewer finds this book not superior to many others already published for the same purpose. The style is pedestrian, the advice is "sound" enough but lacks something of objective realism. This paragraph carries the flavor of the volume:

"The ideals for a college student should be to learn to live the larger, fuller life rather than to make a living. Each one should attain the art of living well—nobly and happily. The final objectives for college men and women are the power to think, the disciplining of the mind, the development of character, and the living of a nobler life of cheerful service to their fellow men." J. C. D.

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## SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

(Continued from page 177)

**MEN TEACHERS:** The draft-created shortage of men teachers may be "alleviated somewhat", according to information given to the U. S. Office of Education by the War Department. The Army doesn't intend nor desire to keep older or married men longer than the one-year training period where an extension might create undue hardship. Drafted teachers to whom these circumstances apply may request their release from their immediate commanding officers.

**DEFENSE:** High schools helping to prepare a hoped-for 3,000,000 workers for defense industries by June 30, 1942, will get a large share of the \$116,122,000 appropriated by Congress for the job. More than \$20,000,000 of the sum is allotted for purchase or rental of equipment.

**CHRISTMAS:** To relieve the shortage of trained retail salespeople for the fall and Christmas season, some Illinois high schools are offering short, elementary courses in salesmanship, store English, and arithmetic to selected adult groups, reports Mary Ann English in *Journal of the Illinois Vocational Association*. Housewives and pupils may enrol to prepare for part-time work.

**ALCOHOL:** West Virginia has joined the states in which instruction on temperance is required by law. Adopted textbooks on health, hygiene, biology, and social sciences must contain material on the nature of alcoholic drinks and narcotics, and their effect on the human system and society in general. Teachers of the four subjects mentioned who fail to deal with temperance at the right time will be fined \$10 for each lapse.

**RADIO:** We thought that each of the possible angles of education was covered by one or more specialized associations. But apparently radio education hadn't been organized. We take pleasure in announcing the new Association for Education by Radio, complete with a Journal. Those interested may write for information to the organization at 228 North La Salle St., Chicago.

**JUNIOR:** Enrolments in public junior colleges have dropped 10 per cent below those of last year, because of the abnormal situation caused by defense activities. Junior-college administrators report a pronounced swing from the so-called cultural subjects to technical, scientific, and short business courses. On the whole, enrolments have not dropped as much as was expected.

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